SPORTS / A29
Archers slam door shut on Tigers

LIFESTYLE / C1
First Pinoy designer at London Fashion Week comes home

ENTERTAINMENT / G1
Stars robbed of material wealth, sense of security

P-Noy wants swift justice for victims of massacre–Palace

By Christine O. Avendaño and Nikko Dizon

PRESIDENT AQUINO wants the wheels of justice to move faster for the victims of the November 2009 Maguindanao massacre, Malacañang said yesterday.

"We do not want to see any further delays," Secretary Herminio Coloma of the Presidential Communications Operations Office told reporters in reaction to the new postponement of the trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr. and 184 cosuspect of

PHOTO A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, September 3, 2010 ++ Vol. 25 / No. 267

Believe it or not: PCSO incurs P1-B loss

By TJ Burgonio

WHILE IT GIVES AWAY millions of pesos in lottery prizes, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) has been losing heavily for the past several years, the agency's head said yesterday.

PCSO Chair Margarita Juico told the

BELIEVE A13

5-member body starts marathon 3-day probe

By Nikko Dizon

A MARATHON three-day inquiry into the botched hostage rescue drama opens today amid hopes by the Philippines and China that the probe will be fair and thorough and those responsible will be held accountable.

Summoned to appear before a five-member fact-finding committee headed by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima was Undersecretary Rico Puno of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Puno, the highest ranking official in the Aquino administration called to testify, has administrative supervision over the Philippine National Police.

Also to take the witness stand today are PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, National Capital Region Police Office Director Leocadio Santiago and Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay.

Magtibay was operational commander during the 11-hour standoff at Rizal Park that killed eight Hong Kong tourists and their abductor, Rolando Mendoza, a police senior inspector seeking reinstatement after he was dis-

5-MEMBER A13

1M poor families to get gov't cash aid

Beneficiaries to receive ₱1,400 each monthly

By Kristine L. Alave and Michelle V. Remo

WITH THE Asian Development Bank (ADB) providing a loan of $400 million, up to 1 million Filipino families among the country's poorest households will receive monthly cash grants of P1,400 each by the end of this year, Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman announced yesterday.

The number of beneficiary families is expected to hit 2.3 million by the end of 2011, Soliman said. (See related story in Business, Page B2.)

Soliman listed several criteria for a family to be entitled to such cash assistance under the so-called Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

- Children 6 to 14 years old must be enrolled in school and attend at least 85 percent of the classes.
- Pregnant women must receive prenatal and postnatal care.
- Parents must attend Family Development Sessions.
- Children under 5 years of age must receive regular preventive health checkups and vaccinations.
- Children in elementary

99 POOR A10

MOBILE HOME A worker tows a toddler on one arm as she maneuvers a pushcart carrying odds and ends and two other children on a busy street in Ermita, Manila. The pushcart also serves as the family home.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE At left, Manila SWAT troops prepare an assault hijacked bus on Aug. 23. Saga ends in tragedy. At right, US state police prepare to lay siege on Discovery Channel. All hostages saved.

ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER BLUNDER?

3 bodies sent to wrong families

HONG KONG—Philippine authorities sent the bodies of three of the victims in the Manila bus hijacking to the wrong families, Hong Kong said yesterday, in the latest of a series of missteps in the handling of the hostage crisis.

The eight bodies were shipped back on Aug. 25 to Hong Kong, where tearful relatives laid wreaths on the coffins of their loved ones at the airport as officials stood in attention—but three families were paying their respects to the wrong bodies.

The three families discovered the mistake when they opened the coffins as the morgue later that night, Hong Kong's Security Bureau said in a statement.

The families had identified the bodies in Manila, so it's possible that funeral parlor workers in the Philippines mislabeled them, the statement said.

The Security Bureau didn't identify which victims were

3 BODIES A21

Robredo's CA confirmation in peril

By Christian V. Esguerra and Norman Bordadora

INTERIOR SECRETARY Jesse Robredo's chances of being confirmed by the powerful Commission on Appointments (CA) now hang in the balance in view of the bungled rescue of Hong Kong tourists held hostage on Aug. 23, according to an ally of President Aquino.

Sen. Francis Escudero, a member of the 13-person Senate contingent in the commission, said Robredo would be quizzed on his actual role during the daylong hostage crisis, which left eight Hong Kong tourists dead.

Escudero said members of Mr. Aquino's Communications Group—Secretaries Edwin

ROBREDO'S A21

Discovery Channel hostage-taker killed

JAMES LEE

SILVER SPRING, Maryland—A man who railed against the Discovery Channel's environmental programming for years burst into the company's headquarters with at least one explosive device strapped to his body on Wednesday and took three people hostage at gunpoint before police gunned him down.

The hostages—two Discovery Communications employees and a security guard—were unharmed.

The four-hour ordeal was the second hostage-taking drama to grab world attention in recent days, occurring a little over a week after eight Hong Kong tourists were killed on a hijacked bus in Manila following a botched police rescue operation. The Manila gunman was also killed.

In the Discovery Channel standoff, the police negotiated by phone throughout the afternoon with the gunman, an Asian-American, who was on the first floor, as the rest of the 1,000 employees and the children in the day-care center were leaving the building near the US capital Washington.

SWAT officers watching the hostage drama on a building security camera crept in, while police negotiated with the emotional gunman.

DISCOVERY A20

Gov't sees 10% drop in HK tourist arrivals

By Norman Bordadora

TOURIST ARRIVALS from Hong Kong are expected to decrease by 10 percent as a result of the Aug. 23 hostage crisis that led to the death of eight tourists from the Chinese territory, a Malacañang official yesterday told reporters.

Citing an assessment by Tourism Secretary Alberto Lim, Communications Secretary Herminio Coloma said the hostage crisis "may lead to a reduction of, at least, 10 percent in terms of the volume of tourist arrivals from Hong Kong."

There were more than 180,000 tourist arrivals from Hong Kong in 2009.

Hong Kong has advised its residents not to visit the Philippines.

Reports said the tourism industry could suffer some P370 million in the aftermath of the bungling of the hostage crisis.

Philippine Airlines (PAL) itself suffered losses of P35 million because of the hostage tragedy.

GOV'T A10

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Second FRONTPAGE

6/42	
2nd	10 12
1st	12 26
3rd	7 12

SUERTE PICK
2nd	8 7 8
1st	6 1 2
3rd	4 4 4

SIX DIGIT
1 1 0 8 0 7

6/45 LUZ-MIN-MIN
11 17 26 31 34 42
P3,000,000.00

SUPER LOTTO 6/49
7 13 14 24 26 40
P16,000,000.00

'Let's not rush impeachment'

Fast-tracking complaints vs Ombudsman a bad idea, says Speaker

By TJ Burgonio

SPEAKER Feliciano Belmonte Jr. yesterday cautioned House members against rushing the deliberations on two impeachment complaints against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

Belmonte said it would be a bad idea to fast-track the complaints filed by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan et al. and Akbayan party-list group et al.

He said the justice committee should not be pressured and should be allowed to deliberate on the complaints at its own pace.

"Let it be heard properly and let people be given the chance to explain. I don't think fast-tracking it is [a good idea]," he told reporters yesterday.

Sufficient in form

The justice committee, chaired by Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., voted last Wednesday to declare the two impeachment complaints sufficient in form, and set the next hearing for next week.

Both complaints accused Gutierrez of betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution for allegedly failing to perform her role as head of the anti-graft investigating body.

Belmonte, who is a close ally of the Liberal Party, headed by President Aquino, has no stand on the impeachment complaints, and doubted that support from the party would make a difference.

"If there is a party stand, I am not in favor. There's no official party stand. Even if the LP has a party stand, it doesn't help because the LP has only 81 members," he said.

At the Wednesday hearing, allies of former President and now Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo moved to inhibit Tupas on the ground that the Ombudsman had ordered his father, former Iloilo Gov. Niel Sr., detained front office. However, Tupas overruled the motion and refused to stand down.

Belmonte also expressed reservations about any move to gather signatures from 90 lawmakers, which would have the effect of immediately transmitting the complaints to the Senate.

Palace hands off

"I am against movements to downscope. I want it to go through the process. I am against going to the floor asking the people to sign. I am for the process. Everybody is entitled to due process," he said.

Malacañang is keeping a hands-off policy on the impeachment Gutierrez move.

Secretary Herminio Coloma, head of the Presidential Communications and Operations Office, said there was a separation of powers between the executive and the legislative department that Malacañang respected.

"That is an independent action of the legislature and we respect the processes in the legislature, including the move for impeachment," Coloma said.

"I think we should just allow the process to run its course," he added.

He said such government processes are affected by many factors, including public opinion.

"We are all wanting to know the real sentiments of our people so we may be guided accordingly," Coloma said. With reports from Norman Bordadora

OK for Pacquiao to be absent from House–Belmonte

By TJ Burgonio

PACQUIAO

SARANGANI Rep. Manny Pacquiao, now in the United States, to prepare his November fight against Mexican Antonio Margarito, need not worry about his attendance record in the House of Representatives.

During the trial, training and the fight itself, the congressman will be absent from the chamber but his colleagues, especially Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr., don't mind.

"It's a worthy thing and I don't think anybody will even blame Manny for being absent in the time he's will, in so far as the record of the House is concerned, he was very vice present," Belmonte told reporters at Annabel's restaurant.

Even so, "he is doing a great service to the country," he added.

Asked if he would get his pay and allowances in full, Belmonte replied, "I would and Pacquiao is just distant there."

Will he fly to the USto watch the bout? He said yes.

Pacquiao has flown to the US for a similar tour in Los Angeles, New York and Dallas to promote his Nov. 13 bout with Margarito at the Cowboys Stadium in Dallas.

He is supposed to return to Manila this weekend to begin training, and will fly back to the US next month to ramp up his training.

Pacquiao, who banked the presidential bid of Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. but later bolted the Nacionalista Party to join President Aquino's Liberal Party, has been named vice chair of the House committee on youth and sports.

"We went along the basic idea that a boxer who serves is both a position as congressman or governor or mayor should go up the ladder to the House starting with the vice chairman," Belmonte explained.

There was a consensus among lawmakers to implement an equitable allowance of seats and assignments to non-admins, he said.

PET orders Comelec to secure ballots cast for VP

By Nikko Dizon

THE SUPREME Court sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET) yesterday ordered the Commission on Elections to "preserve and safeguard the integrity" of the ballot boxes, their contents and keys, and other election paraphernalia used in the May 2010 elections for the position of vice president.

The two-page order came after the PET denied the motion for preliminary hearings on affidavit-in-defense of Vice President Jejomar Binay and granted the separate motions of Binay and losing vice presidential candidate, former Senator Manuel Roxas II, for a precautionary protection order pursuant to Rule 56 of the 2010 Rules of the PET.

Roxas filed an electoral protest against Binay, as he sought a full accounting and the count of three million votes that were not counted during the national canvassing.

Roxas lost by some 700,000 votes to Binay. The Liberal Party president was the running mate of President Aquino.

The PET also ordered the Comelec to secure the list of voters with voting records, books of voters and other documents and paraphernalia.

In a press conference, Supreme Court spokesperson Midas Marquez said that the tribunal denied the preliminary hearing sought by Binay because a preliminary conference will be also be held.

"It's a procedural matter. All arguments will be heard and threshed out during the preliminary conference," Marquez said.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court dismissed the petition for disqualification against former President Joseph Estrada filed by a lawyer last May.

In a seven-page decision, the high court said that following the results of the May 2010 elections, "private respondent [Estrada] was not elected President for the second time. Thus, any discussion of his "reelection" will simply be hypothetical and speculative. It will serve no useful or practical purpose," the Court said in a seven-page decision.

The petition filed on May 7, 2010 by lawyer Evilio Fermenario, opposed Estrada's candidacy asked the high court whether the former President was covered by the ban on the President from "any reelection."

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Probe of Citibank exec reset

THE FIRST hearing at the Manila prosecutors' office on the case of the Citibank executive accused of taking off with millions of clients' money was deferred yesterday after both parties sought an extension to file pertinent documents.

Lawyer Nobuyo Cinco, counsel for Protacio Tecson Jr., former assistant vice president of Citibank's Citigold wealth management unit, said they sought an extension so Ang's counter-affidavit can be filed with assistant city prosecutor Rodolfo Amoyen Jr.

Cinco said in question if they do not know where the reports that Ang had allegedly embezzled hundreds of millions of pesos came from.

"So far as we know, he (Ang) was charged by Citibank for one count of estafa through falsification in connection with Presidential Decree 1689, or syndicated estafa," he said.

He said the alleged count of alleged estafa involved P1.6 million and $40,000.

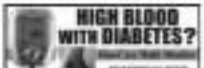
He stressed that the copy of the complaint he and his client had received was based on one client's deposit.

Lawyer Jose Justiniano, who represented Citibank, said they sought a deferment of the hearing so they can file a supplemental affidavit in the complaint against Ang.

He would not disclose the contents of the supplemental affidavit and did not divulge details of the case.

The next hearing before the assistant city prosecutor is set for Sept. 9.

Jeannette I. Andrade



Dengue cases hit record high; more deaths feared

By Philip C. Tubeza, Mitz Cahiya and Julie Aurelio

DR. MAJO Tayag, head of the National Epidemiology Center, yesterday disclosed that the 62,582 dengue cases reported from January to Aug. 27 was the highest ever number recorded in the country, and warned that deaths from dengue could also reach a new high this year.

"This is the highest number of cases recorded. Because the previous record was last year," Tayag told reporters.

"We've already passed the 57,000 cases registered last year. We have been seeing the dengue as of August, which is lower than the 540 deaths last year," he said.

He added, "We hope we don't reach that number but the trend tells us that it will. If the reported cases reach 80,000 and one percent of the patients die, then these means we would have 800 deaths."

Tayag said that the 62,583 cases reported from January to Aug. 27 were 68.8 percent higher than the 33,102 recorded during the same eight-month period last year.

6 Metro blamed

"We had an 89 percent increase from last year and this is because of 11 NCR (a weather phenomenon that brings a prolonged dry spell), the culmination of four dengue strains, and improved reporting," Tayag said.

He said the number of dengue cases can still going up in the National Capital Region, the Cordillera Administrative Region and Western Visayas.

Tayag said that as early as January this year, the number of dengue cases had already shot up, especially from the eastern parts of the country.

"At the start of January, the number of cases was already above average. This is because the eastern part of the country already had rainy weather," Tayag said.

But an official of the Department of Health's regional arm said yesterday that the number of dengue cases in Metro Manila this year was notably lower compared to that of last year, with only three areas considered as dengue-hot spots.

Dr. Jaime Galvez Tallo, assistant director of the Center for Health Development in Metro Manila, said the number of dengue cases in the National Capital Region dropped by 35 percent from last year's figures, from the 6,558 cases posted in 2000 to the 5,3[illegible] in 2016.

The DOH reported that 62 barangay (villages) in Metro Manila were found to have a clustering of cases, 43 of them in Quezon City.

Tallano said that by clustering of cases, the health department means that there are more dengue cases anywhere reported in a barangay in four consecutive weeks.

Bracing for cases

The Quezon City health department said it was bracing itself for more dengue cases this September even as it assured the public that the number of cases this year was lower than those posted in past years.

City health officer Dr. Antonieta Bautista said there was no reason for panic as health officials had been able to contain the dengue cases with regular clean-up drives reported.

It is barangay with reported cases.

"Usually dengue cases go up in August, September because of the rainy season, based on the trend we have observed for the past five years. By then those three cases in two weeks," she said.

The DOH also declared three barangay: Canumay east, 176 in Caloocan and Bahayang in Valenzuela as dengue hotspots for having more than three cases in two weeks.

Barangay 179 had nine cases, Camarin 11, and Bahayang had seven in two consecutive weeks.

HK cop with bullets, shells held

By Jovaine Aning

A HONG KONG police official was held for three hours at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) yesterday for trying to bring out empty shells and bullet slugs taken from war fires confiscated on the firearms of slain hostage-taker Rolando Mendoza.

Chief Insp. Li Ching Yuk Wilson was prevented from boarding Cathay Pacific flight CX 900 at the Naia Terminal 1 as customs officials became wise unable to present clearances from the Department of Justice for the pieces of evidence he was to bring to Hong Kong.

Li, who was accompanied at the airport by Chinese Embassy police attaché Wang Hua, declared the shells and slugs as he checked in his luggage.

The four M-16 Armalite rifle and four .45-caliber pistol empty shells, including their corresponding slugs, were contained in plastic bags placed inside his hand-carry bag.

Case sorted out

However, the Hong Kong lawman was unable to present a clearance from the DOJ. The only document he had was the usual clearance from the Philippine National Police's firearms and explosives office that is required of passengers bringing ammunition out of the country via the airport.

Li was brought by customs and immigration agents to the PNP-Aviation Security Group's (Av Police Center for Aviation Security (PCAS) office. The Cathay Pacific flight left for Hong Kong in around 3 1/2 hours, without him.

Justice Undersecretary Antonio Kintanar and other Chinese Embassy officials later arrived at the airport to sort out the case.

Kintanar said he was sent to the airport by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima herself to personally give the clearance to Li.

"He [Li] was initially authorized to bring those shells to Hong Kong because as you well know, during our meeting with the Hong Kong authorities, we allowed them to conduct test fires aside from inspecting the line where the hostage took place.

"However, we also agreed that all pieces of evidence related to the investigation that would be taken out of the country must first be cleared with the DOJ," Kintanar said a press briefing.

HK test fires

He clarified that the shells and slugs were not taken from the crime scene but came from test fires conducted by the Hong Kong police and forensics team, which is in the country to observe the Philippine investigation.

The Hong Kong team conducted their own test fire on Mendoza's firearms in coordination with the PNP crime laboratory.

"The bullets are theirs. They are bring [the bullets] to Hong Kong. They will not be used in the Philippine investigation because the PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation conducted their test fires," he said.

Kintanar said Li was not even part of the Hong Kong police team that was just tasked by the Hong Kong team to bring the shells and slugs to Hong Kong as he was the Chinese secretary's chief coordinator with the lawyers.

Asked who was to be blamed for the flaws, Kintanar said the Chinese only acknowledged being at fault.

Li declined to speak to reporters when he was let out of the PCAS office at around 5 p.m. He was set to board another Cathay Pacific flight, CX 919, to Hong Kong at around 6:40 p.m. yesterday.

DFA exec fears for fate of Pinoys in Chinese jails

By Christian V. Esguerra

A FORMER affairs official yesterday shared fears that the 10 migrant workers would languish in jail as Philippines out of jail—especially those on death row—in China.

Undersecretary Esteban Conejos, who takes charge of migrant workers' affairs, said the government is not optimistic that Chinese authorities would not risk the ire of the jailed Filipinos, who are all facing drug-related charges, to the hostage debacle.

"The relations between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China have matured tremendously over the last 20 years," Conejos said when asked by reporters after attending a hearing of the Senate committee on foreign relations.

As of Aug. 31, a total of 296 Filipinos have drug charges in seven Chinese provinces, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency reported in the committee.

Of the number, five are on death row while two received "suspended" sentences, meaning good conduct may eventually save them from death.

Guangzhou has the most number of Filipinos on death row at 10, of which nine is facing the supreme punishment with no possibility of reprieve. Four other Filipinos in Shantou are in a similar fix.

Three Filipinos in Shanghai are serving life terms while 68 are on fixed-term imprisonment. There are a total of 17 cases pending before the Chinese courts.

Conejos downplayed the impact of the hostage drama on Philippine-China relations.

"I don't see any abnormality to ease relations. In fact, China has expressed to us readiness to ease mobility to provide a condition, comprehensive, and very thorough investigation on the incident," he said.

In trying to secure the release of jailed Filipinos in China, he said the government has been exploring many possible ideas that "our countrymen are not the big leaders [of drug syndicates], they are just mules."

Conejos told the hearing that Filipino diplomats are banking on securing "newly discovered evidence" to keep jailed Filipinos out of death row. He said the cases involving the five Filipinos on death row have undergone four rounds of review and no appeal available could be decided within two to three weeks.

In the case of one Filipina woman, he said authorities led by the PDEA were able to arrest two members of the syndicate that recruited her, apparently as a drug courier.

'Euro-general' officer now a 'general'

By Alexis Romero

A POLICE officer implicated in the 2008 "euro-generals" scandal has earned his first star despite facing charges before the Ombudsman.

Sr. Supt. Yonnie Bonoy III has been promoted to Chief Superintendent—a one-star rank equivalent to a brigadier general in the military—according to a statement from the public information office of the Philippine National Police (PNP) on the latest round of promotions of police officials approved by President Aquino.

Only last August, the Ombudsman filed graft charges against Bonoy, then chief of the budget division of the directorate for comptrollership, and the rest of the so-called "euro generals," a group of police officials who were stopped at the Moscow airport in 2008 for carrying undeclared cash in excess of the allowable limit.

No bar to promotion

PNP Spokesperson Sr. Supt. Agrimero Cruz quoted Republic Act 9708 as providing that the "institution of a criminal action or complaint against a police officer shall not be a bar to promotion."

The law also says that establishment of probable cause can make an officer ineligible for promotion. But since the case against Bonoy has not reached that stage, he is eligible for promotion, said Cruz. But if probable cause should be established, Bonoy's promotion can be recalled, Cruz said.

Bonoy's promotion as well as those of the other officials was based on the recommendation made by Interior Secretary and National Police Commission (Napolcom) Chair Jesse Robredo and PNP Chief Director General Jesus Verzosa. Robredo's and Verzosa's recommendation was in turn based on the evaluation of the PNP Senior Officers Placement and Promotion Board (SOPPB).

New star

Verzosa officiated at the pinning of Bonoy's new star at a simple ceremony yesterday at Camp Crame that was closed to media.

Also promoted were: Police Director Isecoop Doroy, PNP Director for Information and Communications Technology Management (DICTM); Chief Supt. Alex Paul Monteagudo, Deputy Director Investigation and Detective Management; and Chief Supt. Rodolfo de Asis, executive officer of the Directorate for Information and Communications Technology Management (DICTM).

Promotions were created with the retirement this year of more than 40 police generals.

Bonoy was not with the group of 12 police officials and three police officials' wives who went to Russia in 2008 to attend an Interpol conference in St. Petersburg.

Approved funds

But he was charged, along with the traveling police officials, because he was one of those who approved the funds.

The officials who went to Russia were Police Director Eliseo de la Paz, the then PNP comptroller; Deputy Director General Ricardo Cueva, who headed the delegation; Deputy Director General Ismael Rafanan; Director Jaime Caringal; Director for Plans Reuben Rosario; Director for Operations Gil-berto Alarcio Jr.; Director for Human Resources and Doctrine Development Cresencio Doria and Supt. Elmer Pelobello.

They were joined by the wives of De la Paz, Caringal, Cueva and Verzosa. The latter did not join the trip.

On the ground, any one, De la Paz, who was acting as the group's disbursement officer, was briefly detained and questioned at the Moscow international airport for carrying 185,000 euros (P9.9 million) in cash. It was later revealed that De la Paz actually had P9.2 million with him.

De la Paz claimed that the money was a "cash advance" but Verzosa said the amount was meant to purchase espionage equipment but was illegally released.

In October 2008, Verzosa ordered the filing of criminal charges against De la Paz, Bonoy and two other officers. But he said that Bonoy would not be suspended or relieved.

'Cleared by PNP'

In 2009, then PNP chief Avelino Razon, who had approved the trip, said he did not know why the group had to bring such a huge amount, saying he only approved the amount of P2.5 million for their travel expenses.

The police officials were later asked to return the travel funds. In early 2009, the PNP leadership "cleared" the euro generals after the entire amount was returned.

Those charged by the Ombudsman were: De la Paz, Pelobello, Carlo, Rafanan, Ricardo, Doria, Alarcio and Caringal.

Also charged were: Rosario, Supt. Manuel Rodriguez and Chief Supt. Erlando Portalla. The three were, like Bonoy, not part of the Russian trip but were involved in the approval process.

They were all charged with violations of the Republic Act 3019, or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the Tanggol Law and the Revised Penal Code for falsification of public documents.

Aircon testing kicks off Ozone Month celebration

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THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is hosting this month-on the protection of the ozone layer.

It will kick off the celebration of Ozone Month with a campaign to test the aircon-cooling units of all vehicles, including those used by government officials.

The ozone layer protects the earth from dangerous ultraviolet ultraviolet radiation. In the 1980s, holes in the ozone layer were detected over the North and South Poles, prompting nations to phase out the use of fluorocarbons and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as refrigerants or propellants. Photochemical reactions in the upper atmosphere as a result of these use are thought to lead to a depletion of the ozone layer.

Environment officials, led by Secretary Ramon Paje, set an example by submitting the air conditioners of the DENR service vehicles to testing to check their ozone and climate-friendliness.

The government has been limiting the use of vehicles with air-conditioning units that contain CFCs, chemicals that are believed to damage the ozone layer.

Owners of vehicle models prior to 1999 are required to use environment-friendly refrigerants in their vehicles' air-conditioning units before they are allowed to renew their annual registration.

This is in line with the Kyoto and Montreal Protocols, which are international agreements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to stem global warming.

Leila Salaverria

TEXTING FOR UNDERGROUND RIVER
Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn, Tourism Secretary Alberto Lim and DM Pena Holdings president Harvey Keh-Chek cover away as they launch the Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park's "U.R.V. Wonder of Nature" text voting campaign for the search for the New 7 Wonders of Nature. The event was held at the Ore Esplanade, Mall of Asia Complex, on Aug. 31. The Underground River is one of the finalists of the search for the New 7 Wonders of Nature. Toronto Star/PPUR and used to 1041.

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Champions of the Earth nominations now open

NAIROBI—Nominations are now officially open for the 2011 Champions of the Earth, the United Nations' flagship environmental award.

The award seeks to recognize the achievements of exceptional leaders, thinkers and, more importantly, men and women who have shown determination and enduring commitment toward achieving a cleaner, greener and more prosperous future.

Previous winners of the award include prime ministers and presidents, scientists and leaders of nongovernment organizations and philanthropists.

The public from across the world may nominate their own environmental heroes for the prize.

Nominations will be accepted until Oct. 31 and can be made via the awards website www.unep.org/champions.

The UN will select a laureate for each of these categories: policy leadership, science and innovation, entrepreneurial vision, and inspiration and action.

Each laureate will receive $48,000 in cash and a commemorative trophy at an award ceremony and gala dinner to be held on April 20, 2011.

Past winners

Last year's Champions of the Earth titles for a diverse and inspiring list.

They include Guyana President Bharrat Jagdeo, a passionate advocate for his country's rainforests; Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed, a well-known international climate-change campaigner; Prime Meteorologist Zahir, director general of Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency; and Japanese scientist Dr. Yasu Takahashi, who was honored for his research into how carbon cycles through oceans, land and the atmosphere.

One of China's most popular actresses, Zhou Bin, received a 2010 Champion award for her promotion of green living, while Bollywood veteran superstar Vinod Khosla, also known as Silicon Valley's "Mr. Green," was recognized for his work in investing in renewable energies.

For more information, visit http://www.unep.org/champions/ or e-mail Lucilla Jacinto at lucia.jacinto@unep.org.

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Corrections

IN THE 8/31, 24-HOUR, an article on the Second Front Page—"Palace slashes GOCC subsidies"—misstated the amount of last year's subsidy to government-owned and -controlled corporations. The subsidy for GOCCs this year amounted to P39.2 billion—not P32.2 billion.

The same error appeared in the Aug. 26 editorial—"Obscene"—on Page A14 of the Opinion section.

• • •

Readers may send their comments or corrections of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 888 Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City, fax this to (632) 896-6160, e-mail it to <dayde@inquirer.com.ph>.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to the Public Editor, e-mail it to <publiceditor@inquirer.com.ph> or fax this, (632) 924-3794, (also The Publisher's telephone number is (632) 896-6000 ext. 500).

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, September 3, 2010
22nd Week in Ordinary Time
Gregory the Great

1st Reading: 1 Cor 4:1-5
Gospel: Lk 5:33-39

Yet others and Pharisees asked Jesus, "The disciples of John fast often and say long prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink!" Then Jesus said to them, "You can't make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, but later the bridegroom will be taken from them and they will fast in those days."

Jesus also told them this parable, "No one tears a piece from a new coat to put it on an old coat; otherwise the new will be torn and the piece taken from the new will not match the old. No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed as well. But new wine must be put into fresh skins. You no one who has tasted old wine is eager to get new wine, but says 'The old is good.'"

Commentary:

"Some people said to Jesus, 'The disciples of John fast frequently and offer prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees do the same, but your disciples eat and drink.'

The Holy Spirit is not used like
the holy parsnips does life holds ball.
They have servants will both and accept no will schedule to discuss.
They recognize the presence of God in each.

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Move on, science chief urges ex-Pagasa head

PRESCO NILO, the weather bureau chief who was fired by President Aquino last month, should "move on," said Science and Technology Secretary Mario Montejo.

This was after Nilo said his testimony before the Senate committees on climate change and science and technology yesterday to present his side on the "Ruping" debacle that was the immediate cause of his sacking.

Nilo got the ax after Mr. Aquino was angered by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration's (Pagasa) failure to correctly track the path of Typhoon Basyang last July 13.

Pagasa had predicted that the typhoon would hit Northern Luzon, but it instead skittered into Metro Manila, killing 194 people and causing massive power outages in the capital and neighboring provinces.

"When typhoon Basyang hit Luzon, the chairman of NDCC (National Disaster and Coordinating Council) and DND (Department of National Defense) were just two weeks on the job and they were still trying to cope with the disaster's possible weakness. It's really good if people who are newer officials readily read at any given time even with a new president. Things can move on as they should, I think, with an organization that should function in that manner in a professional way," Nilo told the hearing.

NILO

Glum and media shy

Nilo, who was reportedly demoted and assigned to the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), looked glum at the hearing, refusing to talk to media and avoiding any contact with Montejo.

Montejo, who has recommended Graciano Yumul, a DOST undersecretary, to replace Nilo as Pagasa administrator, said "people should just move on".

Montejo told the joint committee that Pagasa could make do with P100 million in equipment upgrade to boost its weather forecasting capabilities.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, the science committee chair, said the Senate would recommend to the Commission on Audit and the Department of Budget and Management that a depreciation expense account be set up for Pagasa to help it cope with the quick obsolescence of its equipment (every three years) and ensure that the weather bureau has world-class equipment.

Angara said the Senate would look into Montejo's proposal to build a water reservoir/dam in the Pinatubo Hills as a measure to prevent flooding in Metro Manila.

Sen. Loren Legarda, the climate change committee chair, said Pagasa and the NDCC should avail of grants from international agencies like the the Green National Emergency Management Office to boost its equipment and preparedness for disasters. —DJT, Gil Cabacungan

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NEWSBOY OUTSTANDING GRADUATES
Outstanding graduates of the Inquirer Newsboy Foundation for school year 2009-2010 pose with trustees and officials of the foundation, led by vice chair Sarah Prieto-Romualdez and chair Maria Petra Joaquin, in a simple ceremony at the Inquirer building recently. They are (second from left) Jan Garson Mantawil of Sta. Ana National High School, Davao City; Mikael Tolosa of P. Gomez Elementary School, Manila; Reen Jhon Fontilanza of SPED Center, Baguio; and Johann Capilan of St. Mary's School, Iligan. Two other outstanding graduates who did not make it to the event are Rean Ace Garma of University of Sto. Tomas High School and Gale Mae Garma of Angalan City National Trade School. Others in photo are (from left), trustees and officers Danilo Jara, dealer-trustee; Renato Reinoso, vice president/treasurer; Andrew Chanco, Inquirer AVP for circulation; Eduardo Cuisen dealer-trustee for Visayas and Mindanao; and Antonio Portes Jr., news dealer, Davao City.

Sept. 10 is world suicide prevention day

WORLD SUICIDE Prevention Day will be marked on Sept. 10 with the theme "Many Faces, Many Places: Suicide Prevention Across the World" to underscore **the importance of an international effort to prevent suicides.**

Although there are significant **differences in the profiles of suicidal individuals in different parts of the globe, a common thread and risk factors are indicated in most completed suicide attempts,** the Manila Godborn Foundation (MGF) said in a press statement.

The MGF with support from the Department of Health (DOH) is launching for the first time in the Philippines a series of activities to heighten awareness about suicide prevention.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly 1,000 people commit suicide around the globe daily, or one every 40 seconds. For every suicide, 20 or more may have attempted to end their lives, it said.

In the Philippines, the DOH has reported that about five people take their own lives each day, with the 20-24 age group having the highest suicide rate.

Suicide is a major cause of premature death influenced by psychosocial, cultural and environmental risk factors that can be prevented through responses that address the risk factors.

Suicides are underreported to avoid sociocultural stigma, evade police investigations and legal harassment, and reflect insurance. Suicides are also misclassified as accidents, thus official numbers are grossly underestimated.

There is strong evidence to indicate that adequate responses can reduce suicide rates, the MGF said in its statement.

World Suicide Prevention Day was started in 2003 by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) with support from the WHO.

World Suicide Prevention Day aims to raise awareness that suicide is preventable; improve the situation about suicide; and decrease the stigma and debunk the myths surrounding the act.

The WHO and IASP work with governments and other partners to ensure that suicide is no longer stigmatized, criminalized or penalized.

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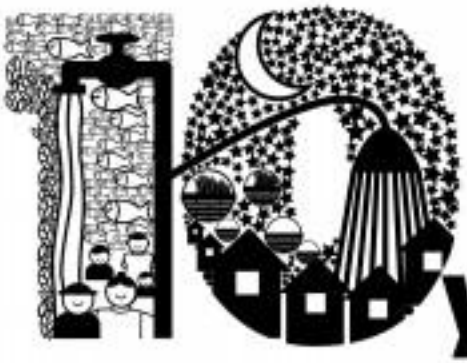

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In 2001, PEF was set up to administer a P1.3 Billion fund raised by the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO). Since then, it has channeled P1.06 billion in income to 1,215 different projects run by NGO's, people's organizations and communities.

The money has funded projects ranging from basic services like potable water and renewable energy in off-the-grid areas, livelihood and employment, relief assistance, social capital and microfinance.

The money has benefited over 330,000 households in the country's poorest communities, or over 1.5 million Filipinos.

Of the total fund, nearly 40% (around P406 million) went to Mindanao, bringing electricity, farm aid and health services; some of the basic prerequisites to peace in the region.

Today, the P1.3 Billion endowment fund has grown to over P1.5 Billion. In the coming years, imagine how many more projects it can fuel, and how many more dreams it can make real.

PEACE AND EQUITY FOUNDATION

PEF Board Members Talk About Fighting Poverty

Susan C. Ople
Agri-Entrepreneur
2004 Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year (Philippines), 2009 The Outstanding Filipina (TOWL) Awardee (Insular Life Assurance Co., Ltd. and the Philippine Jaycee Senate)

After retiring from a large multinational agribusiness company and after working in government for a few years, I, together with like minded business men, helped set up agribusiness ventures in the rural areas where three-fourths of our country's poor live. We were convinced that fertile soils, especially in Mindanao, could bear produce that were highly competitive in both local and global markets.

With the support of local government leaders and the communities where we operate, we have created thousands of jobs and integrated the supply

and help provide access to water, capital, technology and markets for agriculture producers and cooperatives. This access has been given, in part, by the Peace and Equity Foundation through working capital and equipment loans for farmer-producers.

More and more agriculture and aquatic-based enterprises are in the horizon for PEF to support

to better the lives of rural farming families of Mindanao and other regions of the Philippines.

Marietta T. Paragas
Community Health and Education for All Advocate; Founder-Leader, Cotabato Network of NGOs and POs

Nearly a year ago, Typhoon Pepeng hit us hard in Benguet and Mountain Provinces. For more than a decade now, our community workers have trekked to Kamogao and visited towns in Benguet for health and nutrition activities with the poorest vegetable farmer-families. We find it so much fun at

now as landslides hit. Are roads not go beyond the mid-town. So many years of tireless work of the barangay government with the farmers and women groups. The 2hr-trail journey-day ours each-to-the center, were buried in mud. It took us nearly two weeks to get clean water, food and basic medical supplies to the hungry and lost households.

From a Calamity Relief Assistance Fund, PEF added to our donations from Baguio residents to bring basic medicines and supplies to a battered relief mission with Baguio-based doctors. Now, using our Hydro-Forging Rehabilitation Fund, the Benguet Network of NGOs and POs has provided cash loans to farmers-associations for re-planting vegetables and transporting their harvest to the market center. A small grant also got a system cultivators cleaned water and support small bridges so that roads become passable. Small yet timely

(Better to Health and Livelihood)

Fr. Noel B. Vasquez, SJ
Economic and Social Development Leader Co-Founder Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Center for Community Services Former Provincial of the Society of Jesus

The liberation of the poor and social justice have permeated the core of my beliefs and work. I have witnessed close experiences of them in the organizations that I helped found. Ateneo, helter-off students and graduates of the university were exposed to the deteriorating lives and limited opportunities of urban and rural poor families. After college graduation, a good number of young people dedicated their professions and careers to social development work in labor, peasant and student organizing, alternative health care, alternative law practice, and social

mission and values underscoring services with those

Sustaining social change work is a circuit that

resources had to be done by full-time fund-raisers, which our small organizations could barely manage. Many NGOs and community organizations had to close shop in the past two decades because the funding well dried up. So, when PEF was set up, I joined the founding board of trustees because it (1) saw the non-commercial NGO and private

change and development work.

PEF has provided seed funds and re-funding to NGOs so that they can raise more funds and build strategic networks. Our policy research group has done a statistical data-streams on migrant Filipinos and brought together various sectors, including a rural bank and migrant Filipino associations, to use the data to formulate better policies. A small seed fund in the name of a slain farmer-leader of Sumilao, Bukidnon, will raise funds from conscientious citizens to support more agrarian reform causes. Preserving the PEF endowment fund and making it earn will continue the social change work and, as the PEF mission-vision states, *"to provide opportunities for the poor to liberate themselves from poverty."*

Erratum: The draft version of this ad was run by mistake last Sept 1. The publication and media agency regret the error.

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P-Noy wants swift justice for victims of massacre

From page A1

the daughter of 57 people, including at least 30 media workers.

Quezon City Judge Jocelyn Solis Reyes was to have opened the trial on Wednesday but decided in favor of the defense's motion of postponement. She reset the trial on Sept. 6, ordering the criminal law roles had traversed all the way from Mindanao.

In a press briefing, Colmenares said the President remained keen on helping the victims' families attain justice. He reminded reporters that the closing hearing of the Ampatuan cases was among the proposals Mr. Aquino was pursuing.

To further illustrate the President's "strong determination" to bring justice to the victims, Colmenares said one of the speakers at the Sept. 25 rally marking the anniversary of the 1986 People Power Revolution, which Mr. Aquino attended, was Myrna Schlaefli, whose husband was one of the media workers killed in the massacre.

At a press conference, Supreme Court Administrator Midas Marquez defended Reyes from accusations that she lacked "total independence" in the trial.

"We submit to the discretion and the wisdom of the judge on how that case will proceed," Marquez said, adding that he wouldn't be clarify that the trial was not being delayed by "the judge's whims."

Marquez said the Supreme Court was monitoring the "orderly conduct" case.

"We don't see any need to interfere with the decisions or discretions of the judge at this point ... She's a very competent judge," he said.

Slow pace of justice

Colmenares said that even when he was still working the prosecutor's office, Justice had "always deplored the fact that the wheels of justice seem to be grinding very slowly."

For example, Colmenares said, it would take six years each for the exams—from the municipal courts to the Supreme Court—to resolve a case. He also pointed out here that only about 20 percent of cases were brought to court.

Colmenares said this was why the Aquino administration was working to improve the justice system under its watch, as shown by the allocations it had proposed for the judiciary in the 2011 national budget.

He added: "We can only express a view that would probably persuade the rest of our countrymen to bring stronger public opinion to bear on the people who are involved in the trial [of the suspects in the Maguindanao massacre], so it would move quickly."

Asked about the remark of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima that state prosecutors should seek the possible intervention of the Supreme Court in view of the defense's purported delaying tactics, Colmenares said that De Lima knew what had to be done and that the Palace trusted her to do "whatever is necessary to make this process move along more expeditiously."

What happened

Marquez said he had phoned Judge Reyes to find out what actually happened on what could have been the first day of the trial of Ampatuan Jr., a scion of the clan that was charged allied with then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Remember that this is not a simple case. There are 200 accused and some 500 witnesses and, of course, you've seen how the lawyers are arguing the case," said Marquez, who is also the Supreme Court spokesperson.

Marquez said he had called the press conference to allow him to explain Reyes' decision to adjourn Wednesday's hearing.

"She could had conducted three days of preliminary conferences, after which a pretrial conference was held in accordance with the rules of court. After the pretrial conference, she could decide on issuing a pretrial order within 10 days, and the judge was able to do this.

"The pretrial order will govern the proceedings of the hearing. In accordance with the rule, after the judge comes out with a pretrial order, both parties—prosecution and defense—should comment. After the comments, they will all sign the pretrial order. Both parties should agree to the pretrial order.

"What happened was, neither party had submitted the comments on the pretrial order ordered by the judge to [them]. Therefore, the court could not go into that because there are no guidelines yet that would govern the trial."

'Doing her best'

Marquez said Judge Reyes had previously filed

A MOTHER'S TEARS Czherlie Mohol, whose son Victor Heinor of GMTV was among the 57 killed in the Maguindanao massacre, weeps as she is interviewed by a reporter on Wednesday after the postponement of the trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr. and his cronies.

MOHAMAD Sangki, one of the suspects in Maguindanao massacre who turned state witness, answers questions from the media at Camp Bagong Diwa on Wednesday.

short two days—from Aug. 27 to Sept. 1—to comment on the pretrial order. All parties, except one prosecution lawyer, received the notice to comment on the pretrial order, he said.

By setting the first trial day on Sept. 1, the end of the five-day period to comment on the pretrial order, the judge gave him "reason to believe" that she was "doing her best in trying to expedite the resolution of the case," Marquez said.

"The judge was hoping that on that day, [the prosecution and defense] will all agree to the pretrial order," he said.

Reached for comment, Nena Santos, a private lawyer for some of the victims, said she agreed with Marquez's explanation.

She said what the prosecution was protesting was the absence of Ampatuan lawyer Sigrid Fortun to be granted another five days to comment on the pretrial order.

"We are opposing that," Santos said the lawyers by phone, adding that Fortun had also wanted the trial delayed by arguing that Ampatuan Jr.'s lawyers should be assigned, and had yet to be arraigned and by charging up motions that he

Believe it or not: PCSO incurs ₱1-B loss

From page A1

House committee on appropriations that the agency had incurred ₱1.2 billion in accounts payable from 2009 to the present.

The bills, mostly owed to hospitals, fed to ₱1 billion of loss on hand 2009, Jaro later told reporters, citing the findings of a consultant from the auditing firm SGV.

"In my dismay, the COA Commission on Audit] reported that for the last three to four years we've been suffering a net loss. I couldn't believe that myself because everywhere you go they look at PCSO as so wealthy. All of a sudden we have this net loss," she told the committee.

The House appropriations committee, chaired by Cavite Rep. Joseph Emilio Abaya, yesterday began to tackle the second day hearings on the Development Budget Coordinating Committee on President Aquino's proposed ₱1.645-trillion national budget for 2011.

To reflect a profit each year, the PCSO would report its expenses in the financial statement not in the current year that these were incurred, but in the following year, according to Jaro.

Overspending

"Every time there's a profit reflected, they go all out and give benefits or overspend to such year the same thing happens. So there was an accumulation of net losses. I had to get a consultant from SGV to look at the books, and confirmed that we were losing heavily," she said.

This prompted Abaya to remark: "I'm just worried that the very reason that your office is in attendance [at this hearing] is that it's a reason of revenues. We don't want it to be one of [GOCCs (government-owned and -controlled corporations) ranking blood from the government tube."

Jaro responded by saying: "I think we've made moves to stop the heavier drugs."

The PCSO has a separate pork fund for bills shenanigs.

Jaro confirmed that the bulk of the accounts payable was due government hospitals and medical institutions, for which the PCSO allots endowment funds.

The PCSO has a program that allots part of endowment funds to government hospitals and medical institutions for the treatment of the poor.

Too many guarantees

Jaro said the problem arose when the then PCSO general manager and board of directors gave away too many guarantee letters to patients without the knowledge of the office in charge of fund allocation.

It reached a point when the accounts payable to hospitals far exceeded the money at the fund allocation office, Jaro said.

"Fund allocation would say, we owe ₱400,000 to this hospital, and this hospital would give us a bill saying 'You owe us ₱5 million,'" she told reporters after the hearing.

The previous PCSO board was chaired by Sergio Valencia. Its members were Jose R. Faraz II, Reynaldo Roquero, Manolito Morato and Fatima Sotelo.

P29M owed to Makati Med

During the hearing, Davao Oriental Rep. Thelma Almario said the PCSO owed Makati Medical Center about ₱29 million, and the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTI) ₱10 million, a discovery she made while facilitating a request of an ailing constituent availing himself of the endowment fund.

"We believe there's really a hemorrhage of funds, but this should be within limit in the fixed rolls," Almario said.

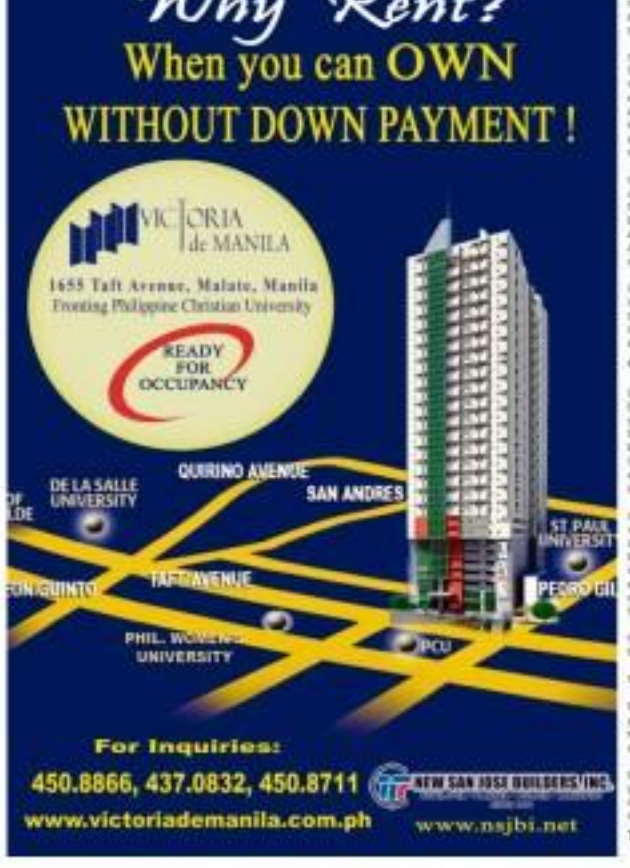
Rongpo Agoes, PCSO assistant general manager for corporate planning, said most of the accounts payable were charity funds for government hospitals and medical institutions, such as NKTI, Heart Center of the Philippines and Lung Center of the Philippines, among others.

"We will be giving a report after establishing the accuracy of figures submitted by different department heads," Agoes, also concurrent PCSO manager of budget and accounting, later told reporters.

Jaro said the PCSO was undertaking a "cash count" to determine the financial standing of the agency.

"We were serving 36, but it couldn't catch up with the expenditures," she told reporters, referring to the years before she took over chairmanship of the PCSO under the Aquino administration.

At the hearing, Jaro also disclosed that more than 70 lawmakers and more than 50 governors had availed themselves of ambulances from the PCSO for free from 2009 to '10. Under an arrangement, the PCSO would pay 50 percent of the bill, and local government units, 40 percent.



Cloudy days, scattered rains ahead

By Kristine L. Alave

CLOUDY DAYS and scattered rain showers are expected in Luzon in the next four days even as one of the two low pressure areas (LPA) sighted yesterday morning has weakened, the weather bureau said.

As to 2 p.m. advisory yesterday the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said the entire Philippines will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms in the next four days due to the southwest monsoon.

The monsoon is responsible for the heavy rains that soaked Metro Manila and parts of Luzon the past few days.

The weather bureau said only one of the two low pressure areas sighted yesterday morning remained under surveillance.

The active LPA was sighted 650 km east of northern Luzon, too far to affect the country's weather as of yesterday.

The other LPA, which formed 715 km off Tagaytay in Cavite province, is classified as "Medium" but does not pose any threat, Pagasa said.

4th graders do Math better in Filipino, says UP prof

By Tarra Quismundo

IN SOLSONIANA City early this year, fourth graders were given a Math quiz in Filipino while sixth graders took the same quiz in English.

Who fared better? Surprise, surprise: The fourth graders who had taken the quiz in Filipino scored higher marks.

Two years ago, first graders in Labrador, Bahlogan, stunned observers when they scored two paragraphs of prose in their native Libelbangan.

In a country where intellect is often equated with one's facility for the English language, linguistics experts welcome the arrival of the use of the local language—all 170 of them—as the medium of instruction in schools.

In his 10-point basic education agenda, President Aquino has included the use of local language in teaching every-level students under a multilingual education system.

With the planned extension of the 10-year education system by two more years, the use of the local language as the medium of instruction may finally get its big break, linguistics experts told the Inquirer.

Burning at the seams

"The L1 (first language) industry is going to burst at the seams," said Ricardo Ma. Duran Nolasco, an assistant professor at the University of the Philippines-Diliman Department of Linguistics.

"This is the right opportunity. You need ten more Presidents for things to become better, but we have to do it now," said Nolasco, who is also president of the 170+ Tagalugan M.E. Consortium, an umbrella of organizations advocating the use of mother-tongue based multilingual education (MTBMLE).

Education that begins with the mother tongue is a long-proven teaching strategy, he said.

"It's very basic. It's common sense. You start from the known to the unknown. That means just use the student's first language as a resource and teach them the basics in their L1," Nolasco said.

Under the program, students will be taught using their mother tongue—Cebuano, Kapampangan, Hiligaynon or Ilocano—during the first few years of study.

Secondary languages or L2, which include Filipino and English, will be gradually introduced with the goal of equally developing a student's skill in all languages, said Orel Ierardo, an MLE advocate from EPP Bilimon College of Education.

The Department of Education phased the need for multilingual education last year through Department Order 74, which institutionalized multilingual education following years of English-based instruction.

"MLE will eventually strengthen English because you are building a strong foundation and a strong bridge towards learning secondary languages... it's equal proficiency in all languages," Ierardo said.

Studies conducted both locally and abroad have proven the advantages of using the mother tongue in education. English-based instruction in the Philippines has, time and again, yielded poor results among high school students in international math and science tests, while countries like China and Japan, that use their own language in schools, have fared among the best.

Sore thumb

"We're the only sore thumb. We're proud of a 10-year system that's taught in English," Nolasco said in reference to English and Filipino.

But the system is not bent on killing any one of the languages in formal education, he added.

As educators and academicians take baby steps towards mainstreaming MTBMLE, the advocacy has been gaining ground, MLE advocate Ierardo said.

"We discovered that there are many grassroots organizations who are already doing it and they are developing materials with local writers," she said.

Teachers have also been teaching their local languages more widely...an expert, once Ierardo describes as "liberating" for educators reluctant hands-have long been used to using English in their classes.

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OPINION

Haunted houses

EDITORIAL

THE SWIFT response of the House of Representatives and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to the Inquirer's special report on shady housing loan practices of Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp. is most welcome.

On the surface, the Other Working Groups program (OWG) looks like a well-intentioned undertaking. It was designed to make decent housing units accessible to "workers who are not formally employed but earn money through small businesses." But two years down the road, the program's record is littered with dead men, missing or fictitious borrowers, fake Pag-Ibig members and duped "workers" who took out bogus loans on yet unfinished houses, most of them, if not all, apparently uninhabitable as they were doing so. To make matters worse, the documentary requirements for their loans are incomplete, or lack the necessary signatures, or if they have any, those are forged. Add to this list the "below standard, unoccupied and closed units." We might as well call the OWG a program of "haunted houses" or "ghost towns."

This program has the hallmarks of a scandal that can only grow worse if left unchecked. The OWG is being bankrolled by the Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig), a savings-and-housing finance agency, whose funds come from mandatory savings deducted from the monthly salaries of government and private sector employees all over the country. The ease with which Pag-Ibig allowed the program to proceed smacks of a lack of care and study, if not corruption. It is Pag-Ibig's primary responsibility to protect these funds for its members.

Delfin Lee, president of Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp., justified the OWG by claiming that it was a "mere promise" he reached with Pag-Ibig in 2008. He had complained about Pag-Ibig giving him a hard time collecting the loan proceeds for Xavera housing units in the towns of Bacolor, Clavier and Mabalacat, Pampanga. The compromise was reached through then Vice President Noli de Castro's mediation and approved by the Pag-Ibig board. It is "a new membership category that was started because of my complaint," Lee said.

But Pag-Ibig sources said the big guns that the OWG hired were rules on securing Pag-Ibig loans by reducing the requirements for membership. Also, the processing of loan applications for Globe Asiatique's Xavera housing units was fast-tracked and took just one- to three-days instead of the usual five to six months.

The program has allowed Lee to collect nearly P7 billion during the past two years, the sources said. But Lee said, "I figured we have to come up with special arrangements but in return I will guarantee this income for five years."

Lee also justified the award of multiple housing units to some applicants and the use of dummies, saying there is no law banning these practices. What is important, he said, is that the loans will be paid.

But laws have been violated. Misrepresentations have been made. Documents have been falsified. All in the name of "other working groups" which include the unemployed, students, Filipinos dependent on OFW remittances, signatories who go running after "getting" the loan, and even dead persons. If this is not fraud, what is?

So now, billions of honestly earned pesos, hard-earned savings, the fruits of blood and sweat of millions of Filipino workers, held in trust by Pag-Ibig for their emergency or future use are now in real danger of being dissipated "in the name" of non-members. It is hard to imagine how these savings can be preserved when safeguards that were previously designed to keep them intact are being set aside.

House Majority Floor Leader Neptali Gonzales II, who has called for an investigation of this suspicious housing loan scheme, warned of a possible "financial crisis." "This is worrisome," he said. "We don't know how much this would impact on Pag-Ibig in particular and the economy in general."

At this point, few people know how big the program is and how much money is involved. Pag-Ibig officials say Globe Asiatique was able to take out loan proceeds on behalf of borrowers in another housing project, Sonoreno—again, without proper documentation despite the Xavera experience?

Xavera could just be the tip of the iceberg. How many other developers out there are taking advantage of this scheme or some variation of it? A deeper investigation is very much in order.

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Officials named to GOCCs are mercenaries

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT IS now clear why the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) cannot provide enough water to the people, which is its primary responsibility. And why the retirement benefits of employees of the Social Security System (SSS) are so pitifully tiny that it is a joke.

In the case of the MWSS, its officials are so busy increasing rates for the numerous franchises they give themselves that they have no time left to develop more water sources to supply to the franchisees. In the case of the SSS, its officials are so busy counting the profits and dividends they get from the private companies where they have invested the money of SSS members that they have no more time to look after the welfare of its members who pay the premiums that they invest, from which they get their profits and dividends. Also, they use most of SSS funds for themselves so that there is little left for the members.

Who determines how much should be the salaries, allowances and bonuses of officials not only of the MWSS and the SSS but also of other government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs)? Why, the boards of directors of the corporations themselves. And it is human nature that when you give greedy people this much power, their greed will take over and they will use this power to benefit themselves.

It is unbelievable that the pay of GOCCs are kept in check by the Salary Standardization Law. But the GOCCs lobbied that they be exempted from the national pay scale so that they could appropriate the pay scales of private corporations. In so doing, they said, they would be able to attract successful executives of private corporations to join the government.

But with the high pay scales, the GOCCs attracted not bright private executives but mediocrities.

Look at the members of the boards of directors of most GOCCs. They are mostly subalterns, defeated candidates, protégés of politicians, camp followers, friends and relatives of politicians with little or no experience in the positions. If there are executives who came from private corporations, they are the failures. So where are the bright boys that the high pay are supposed to attract?

President Aquino should first see to it that, using an executive order putting a cap on the pay of GOCC officials as the salaries have been increased. For each day that there is no limit to their pay, these officials will rob their own corporations and the people and was laughing all the way to their banks.

The Senate has uncovered enough evidence to prove that GOCC officials are abusing the authority given them for their purposes.

The framers of our original Constitution already saw the human frailty that will succumb to the temptation to enrich "self" with power given to the power to do so. So they put a limit to the power of Congress to appropriate funds. They are prohibited from increasing their own salaries.

But the politicians found a way to go around this prohibition. While not giving themselves salary increases, they give themselves all sorts of allowances. Then they invented the pork barrel and the congressional insertions.

That is what the directors of the MWSS and other GOCCs are imitating. Aside from allowances, they have given themselves all sorts of bonuses limited only by the available funds in the distressed corporations. As of last count, the MWSS had 120 bonuses every year, including a so-called gender-sensitive bonus, whatever that means. That means they have more than two bonuses every month. Not only that, each director gets P14,000 for attending each meeting (that's less than one euro bonus, for they had two meetings a day and each director collects 196,000 a day just for attending meetings, aside from the other allowances and bonuses. You bet, even for non-executives.

As the SSS, the top officials collect half a million pesos each month in salaries, aside from the miscellaneous bonuses and per diems. In addition, they get profit shares from private corporations where the SSS has invested billions of members' money.

For example, former SSS Chair Turbino Genuino has now collected P15.3 million in profit share from Union Bank, according to Sen. Franklin Drilon. That is in addition to P1.36 million in per diems. Former SSS President Romulo Neri also got the same amount, as well as Diosdado Aparicio, sons of a past congressman.

Nakakaloka, Chairman said he and the other SSS executives deserve the profit share because "they took on immense responsibilities, as well as risks...."

What risks? The money they invested in Union Bank belongs not to them but to SSS members. And their responsibility is to the SSS members whose premiums it was they invested. It was the members' money that was at risk, and therefore the profit share should go to them.

They were elected directors of the bank not because of their talents(?) and scintillating personalities, but because of the SSS money they longing to the members that they invested in the bank.

The profit shares from private corporations where SSS money are invested should go back to the SSS, not to the people who represent it and who are already handsomely paid. SSS money is invested so that it would grow and increase the benefits to its members—not somebody whose the SSS could be working...would also increase.

Let's face it, the huge funds of the SSS (and also of the Government Service Insurance System) and Pag-IBIG are not due to the talents and hard work of their officials. They come from the premiums deducted from the salaries of government and private employees, whether they like it or not. Without the officials lifting a finger, these premiums are held on their hapless employees' behalf. The profits from these funds should therefore go back to the members who contribute them.

Diplomatic row: RP-HK or RP-Beijing?

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE MAYHEM of a hostage rescue last week is a humanitarian tragedy that has brought sorrow to the victims' families and shame to our people. It calls for apology and remorse from our side, which we have given repeatedly and in good measure. It calls for orders from those above in the police, the foreign service and Malacañang who for all our sakes had better shape up. But as the use of words escalates, we must guard against polite ears who will replace genuine human agony for illicit political ends. Let us take stock of what we're dealing with here.

Donald Tsang is the chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), which is a part of the People's Republic of China. He is also a political leader whose approval ratings have been dipping precipitously. The outrage by the people of Hong Kong is genuine, their indignation is justified, and Tsang, as their chief executive, has rightly taken up their cause. But it is equally his responsibility to ensure that resource do not get out of hand. It doesn't help anyone for his administration to degenerate into endless bashfesting, an ubiquitous do that will outweigh its cut sets. I imagine that the tragedy at the Quirino Grandstand provides a perfect platform for grandstanding. Tsang must resist the temptation to use the hostage crisis to play blame-game-beijing for his own political ends. And both Manila and Beijing must tell that to Tsang even enough.

To start with, he governs under the Basic Law, the "mini-constitution" of the HKSAR. The Basic Law gives Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy in every phase of governance. This Basic Law, together with the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, carries out Deng Xiaoping's "one country, two systems" policy for Hong Kong, and Jiang Zemin's assurance that "the current status will not interfere with the well-being."

The Hong Kong government thus exercises executive, legislative and judicial powers, but the Central Government in Beijing retains power over defense and foreign affairs. While its supposed to attract?

As the Basic Law spells Hong Kong much autonomy in external affairs, allowing it to participate in international meetings and diplomatic missions under the name "Hong Kong, China," still the fundamental principle remains: "The Central People's Government shall be responsible for the foreign affairs relating to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region."

This is clear but set up, Beijing's interest is to assure the people of Hong Kong that it remains their steady and reliable protector internationally. Tsang can thus play the "Manila card" against Beijing, and dare Beijing to show how far it will stand by its people of Hong Kong. He can push tensions in the hub condition that Beijing wouldn't want to be seen as going soft on offending its own people. Beijing is thus caught between its larger foreign policy interests in Southeast Asia and its specific and particular bond with the people of Hong Kong. Conversely, however, Tsang can also navigate his bond and past Beijing as a basic. But foreign policy is ultimately Beijing's domain, he can shift to Beijing the problems arising under international law while milking the crisis for its full value in domestic politics.

For instance, last week, the Philippine Consulate in Hong Kong was under siege by protesters legitimately exercising their freedom of speech. But reports said that the seal of the Republic was defaced by some of the protesters who hung posters over it. Common sense has to bar the Philippine government from allowing police to protect the Hong Kong consul. Embassy in Makati during 2005 diplomatic standoff between the Philippines and Singapore over the execution of Flor Contemplacion...and essentially prevent.

That incident at the Philippine Consulate threatened to breach the inviolability of our consular premises, and HK authorities DE short of the "receiving State's duty] to protect the consular premises against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the consular post or impairment of its dignity." This would squarely engage the state responsibility of China, but it isn't. Donald Tsang who would have to do the explaining to our international partners. That story would be under scrutiny internationally to easily shifted to Beijing...again, while Tsang reaps political windfall as the champion of Hong Kong's interests.

Thus far Manila authorities seem to have fared it the best of bad cards among its feuding politicians and its oblivious to this dynamic between the Hong Kong political and the central authorities in Beijing. I have sensed some salacious rattling with Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, reported to be poised to raise the issue of "How and where manning disaster rescued saved operations over the Specific Manila.

If this is deliberate, then it is calculated to send a message to Beijing as the core of China's foreign policy, telling them to cool things down. But if this is not, if there is no one, there is no one that Beijing can rein in Tsang without appearing to have compromised Hong Kong's interests. We must do that because it serves no one's interests—neither China's, the Philippines' nor the world's—for qualms to fly over the South China Sea.

If on the other hand it wasn't deliberate and we have simply confused and conflated Hong Kong's and Beijing's interests, then we better recalibrate our thetoric. We must avoid needlessly antagonizing Beijing rules to on our side on this issue but can't show it too openly. In terms of our foreign policy, we must support the people of Hong Kong whose grievance is heartfelt and needs to be satisfied, and segregate the interests of the Hong Kong people from that of their political ists.

Whose heads will roll?

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

IN ONE of his press conferences after the hostage-taking and bloodbath at the Quirino Grandstand, a palpitating President Aquino pledged that "heads will roll" as soon as an official investigation determines responsibility for the bungled government response to the hijacking of a bus with 22 tourists from Hong Kong on board.

A week since the tragedy, the new government is unclear on whose head the axe will fall. What is clear is that the fallout from the episode has heavily damaged the prestige of Mr. Aquino in the first major administrative test of his ability to cope with crisis. The tragedy has also strained relations between the Philippines and China, its largest and geographically closest Asian neighbor.

No one among the key Cabinet members and senior officials of the Aquino administration, who had something to do with responding to the hostage-taking, has come forward to take responsibility, in spite of the fact that eight of the hostages were killed and the demands from an outraged Philippine public for the dismissal or resignation of certain officials. Those officials have been busily washing their hands of the responsibility.

Although the President has profusely expressed regrets to the Chinese government and the families of the victims, and has acknowledged the shortcomings of the Philippine National Police, leading to the massacre, he has been slow to take stern measures against his officials.

A first-hundred-days assessment headed by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima is trying to determine responsibility. The heat is on the Department of Interior and Local Government, the department that has jurisdiction and supervision of the PNP. But it has been revealed that the DILG is fractured, with the secretary and his undersecretary shifting responsibility for the bungled police rescue operations. Prior to the crisis, the President had divided the functions of Secretary Jesse Robredo, and Undersecretary Rico Puno. For what reason or unexplained reasons, the President defined Robredo's responsibility as limited to being in charge only of local governments, with no say on police matters. Puno, himself a former police officer, distinctly claims that he did not intervene in the crisis, although he would have wanted to do so. The splitting of the functions led to the hollowing-out of the powers and responsibility of Robredo.

Puno told this reporter that at 11:30 a.m., on the day the hostages were seized, he was summoned to the Malacañang where Cabinet secretaries were given assignments. "I didn't handle it [the crisis]," he said. "I was there to oversee the carrying out of the orders of the President." He said Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay, the Manila police district director, and Supt. Orlando Mina, the chief negotiator, were the operational commanders.

Since Robredo was stripped of his power to take charge and direct police measures, he was given a mop to handle his face publicly when many in the public were asking where he was during the crisis. At that moment, all that Robredo was doing to show his presence was to spew such nonsense as that the crisis was being handled in an "instructional" manner, whatever that means. Thus, when it comes to assuming those who might be sacked, there is little evidence to pin him down for being remiss in his responsibility as crisis control-in-head of the DILG. But since he has been ordered to a figure head, it would be logical to say that the country would lose nothing if Robredo were removed. So to-see-less any way.

The DILG is the first casualty of the inept handling of the crisis by the Aquino administration. Robredo did not even make the slightest attempt to defend the embattled men the police as defined by the DILG charter.

The other bureaucratic structure that was ordered to a shambles by the crisis was the newly created Presidential Communications Group, with its three heads, all acting as presidential spokespersons: Lucinda Teddy Carmelinda and Herminio Coloma. Teddy Carmelinda and Herminio Coloma had already made a distribution on his statement. The question of the President's public statements and responsibility to provide accurate information about developments on the unfolding crisis.

Whom are we to believe? Among the three voices, no one is authoritative enough to act as the mouthpiece of the President. If the government is searching for someone to hold accountable, it would be best just to pinpoint responsibility for the communications mix-up. Somehow, the main finds drawn is who is more credible: Lucinda, Carmelinda or Coloma.

An 'Ondoy' flashback

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I HAD an "Ondoy" flashback last week, about a month before the first anniversary of those devastating floods that left much of Metro Manila, but especially the eastern part of the metropolis (Marikina, Pasig, Cainta and Antipolo) under floodwaters.

My husband woke me up from an afternoon nap when he announced that he was taking our vehicle and fetching our daughter before the worst level on our street rose any higher. Curious, I went to check the water out of my front window and found to my shock and awe floodwater rising above our sidewalk, with vehicles rushing in with every passing vehicle.

"Stay!" I told my self-appointed hero. "I pleaded, and started to pack several bags full of clothes. By the time we reached our SUV, we had waded through ankle-high water in the driving rain. Visions of the last time standing Sunday floods came rushing back, along with memories of what we learned after Ondoy when I had to wade through and and nearly waist that reached chest-high inside our home as I ventured to my sister-in-law's house next door.

That afternoon, as we made our way to Marcos Highway, the water was already high enough to possibly crawling near the subdivision gate which is the highest spot in the area. Driving slowly through, all the cars parked near the gate were bobbing up and down like floating ducks. On the highway, it was already a mess, with cars and trucks and a few assaulted vehicles on the road more towards Sumulong Highway.

We called my son not to drive home in the meantime since his car would not be able to make it through the water, but he was already on campus and are all agreed to meet at Gateway Mall in Cubao where we would have dinner and perhaps take in a movie while we waited for the floodwaters to recede.

Upon seeing me, my daughter's eyes nearly popped out. "Mom!" she exclaimed, as she took in her parents in loose clothes. "how could you leave the house without securing it first?"

"I'm sorry, I was so panicked," I said.

"I'm sorry, I was so panicked," I said.

We reached home at exactly midnight, after negotiating the terrible traffic on Marcos Highway but found our street clear, though many of our potted plants had been uprooted or else flattened away.

I had said frequently that I was afraid how I'd react once the Ondoy anniversary came around, with the papers and networks probably bringing all the scenes of devastation back to vivid life. Now I know all it takes is an electric amount of rain and even a little flood to bring back the emotions of that day and the days that followed. If anything, Ondoy reminded us that the Earth is no longer a safe place to live in, that even our once little middle-class slice of paradise could be ruined by water, mud and muck.

* * *

CONGRESSWOMAN some weeks back, Gina Macadaeg, a neighbor and the indefatigable administrator of our homeowners association, came up with a plan to raise funds to repair the roadways between our association's president, Francesco Limentes, and local officials of Antipolo and of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Some word about this issue, Gina pleaded, "before our village becomes another Cubao!"

The issue at hand is a proposed billion-peso road widening project of Marcos Highway by the DPWH. Last year, after Ondoy, our homeowners association raised questions about the project's impact on our area's slow drive to progress and to develop a drainage plan. In a meeting, it was agreed that no road widening would begin until an "acceptable flood solution" was offered. The ongoing construction of SM Masinag and its implications on barbers flooding in the area was also discussed, with no conclusion.

Now it seems that the DPWH will proceed with the road widening. Engineers with the DPWH Engineering Office have suggested that Bali Creek, which winds through several subdivisions in the vicinity, should be cleared of structures to prevent flooding. Noted Sandhya Bay Corporation's Jesus Mendoza, Tolentino has been writing to the DPWH, the ICLRB and the Antipolo City government requesting the issuance of a construction permit to a developer who has begun building homes right on the easement of Bali Creek. The developer is supposed to provide an area for the absorption of water that overruns the creek during strong rains, to ease flow before the floods reach residential areas.

Where the homeowners' association petitioned the city government to look into the development of the creek easement area, the city planning and development office approved the area and found ongoing development for a new subdivision. But a report said the inspectors found no encroachment on the three-meter easement, although it also found that the easement "is now part of the existing creek due to continuous erosion."

* * *

ADD this takes the cake. Saying the homeowners' allegation has been proven "not true," the same report recommended that "those constructions on this area should be done whenever heavy downpour occurs ... to determine what engineering solutions to be undertaken."

Pleasant! Antipolo City authorities' only mitigation plan in the event of heavy rain (over, if not of Ondoy proportions) would be to "closely monitor" Bali Creek and "inform and notify those dwellings within the impervious flood zone." Fortunately, I'm not I had good reason to panic last week. Seems like our local authorities have no plans of action to place to ease another typhoon-or-rainfall approaching. Only a declaration of "state of calamity" can get to celebrate the Ondoy anniversary. Has no one learned anything?

If Antipolo is taking such measures with a dying and a crash, I wonder what other local government units have done to prepare for the next disaster. It's time somebody established an audit of disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts if only to prevent another Ondoy.

Medicine at UPLB?

MEDICINE SCHOOL training in the Philippines has been criticized as being biased for urban settings, with doctors trained to work in hospitals, using expensive technologies and procedures.

There has been an lack of a search for alternative models. For several years now, the University of the Philippines has been implementing a kalibrated medical training program

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

to earn degrees in community health or midwifery and nursing before finally becoming a medical doctor (MD). The doctors are actually community scholars and, after getting such degrees, they have to go back to town in their hometowns for a certain period.

The program is under the UP College of Medicine but has its own academic unit: the School of Health Sciences. The first campus was set up in Palo Leyte, in the 1970s and, in recent years, has expanded to Baler, Aurora and General Santos City in South Cotabato.

Last month, Dr. Teodulfo M. Tapacio Jr. delivered a UP Centennial Lecture at UP Los Baños proposing still another model to better respond to health needs in the country. A National Scientist, former dean of the UP College of Veterinary Medicine and now emeritus professor, Dr. Tapacio has dedicated his life to veterinary medicine as well as human public health.

I had the privilege of being one of Dr. Tapacio's students (which is why I insist on writing about him with the "Dr.") and we have maintained contact through the years. When he first began to propose his paper he asked if he could share some of his ideas with me and I immediately obliged.

Veterinary medicine in UP Diliman?

I learned that the UP College of Medicine, which has always been in Manila, was nearly transferred to the Ultimas campus, with then president Carlos Romulo first proposing a new site in 1962. The Philippine General Hospital (PGH) would have been kept in Manila but the medical school was thought to be more appropriate in Diliman. The board of regents approved the proposal in 1963 and the Ultimas site was acquired to build a new medical complex, even sending a group of advisers who lived on campus in Diliman to what is now known as Parok Agrimalis. Dr. Tapacio, then dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine (which was also in Diliman), was invited to help plan this new medical complex.

Plans for the new medical complex, though when student activism protested and build rallies in front of the basement Parok Agrimalis houses, Rockefeller pulled out and that was it.

The College of Veterinary Medicine transferred to Los Baños in 1965, and Dr. Tapacio continued to dream about a more interdisciplinary approach to veterinary and human veterinarians. In his UP centennial lecture, he pointed out that scientists have identified, globally, more than 800 zoonoses or diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans. In the Philippines alone, there are about 45.

Rabies is one of the more deadly zoonoses, with the Philippines having one of the highest rabies death rates in the world.

Many Filipinos are aware of leptospirosis which can associate with rat urine contaminating flood waters, but the disease breaks out not just during typhoons and floods but is a daily threat to farmers, who can get infected through contaminated rice fields.

Dr. Tapacio is also pushing for a College of Comparative Medicine, pointing out that human medicine has much to learn from studies on animal models. He mentioned metabolic syndrome as an example, the syndrome being caused by obesity, which leads to diabetes and heart disease. Researchers at Purdue University have been looking at how dolphins develop fat pigs, in a search for prevention methods as well as treatment.

Pigs actually come close to humans when it comes to anatomy and physiology. Pig heart valves, for example, have saved many human with defective valves. In human research on the processes involved in the decay of corpses, it would be unethical to examine corpses to see how processes are used instead, again because they come closest to humans.

Appendicitis

Given all these potential links between human and veterinary medicine, Dr. Tapacio is convincing his dreams of a more interdisciplinary approach has become more relevant in UP Los Baños. He calls for the creation of an Agromedicine Center which will involve four academic units: the College of Veterinary Medicine, the College of Agriculture, a Food Safety Research Center and a College of Human and Comparative Medicine. The units would offer courses in meat medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, nutrition and zoonoses.

The link between nutrition and health is not always emphasized enough in medical training so Dr. Tapacio's vision of a medical school in Los Baños becomes even more compelling. UP Los Baños is already a teaching and research hub for agriculture and the environmental sciences.

UP Los Baños would not be totally new to medicine. In 1997 a UP Los Baños committee headed by Dr. Dolores Ramirez already proposed a medical school in Los Baños with five-year curriculum with emphasis on community medicine. The medical school would have been attached to a tertiary hospital, with the Southern Tagalog Regional Hospital a philanderpine who pledged money for this project backed out and UP Los Baños had to set aside the project.

For many years, too, the UP College of Medicine had a comprehensive community health program where students were deployed in Bay a town next to Los Baños, for exposure to rural medicine. Medical students actively lived in the community, going home to home doing community work as well as rendering medical services. Sadly because Bay was becoming too much of a social laboratory, the residents complaining about being "surveyed to death," the UP College of Medicine now sends students to San Juan, Batangas, instead.

As a nonphysician who "dabbled" into human public health and a medical anthropologist, I'm lobbying for Dr. Tapacio's project, and would add that social scientists could play major roles as well in this new medical complex. It was in Bay, Laguna, where anthropologist Felipe Jocano did his research on childhood morbidity, the National Museum publishing his findings in a book titled "Growing Philippine Families." In 1971. Recently reprinted, the book is considered a classic in medical anthropology in the Philippines.

Dr. Tapacio quotes from Rudolf Virchow, a 19th century pathologist and public health advocate considered in his use of the pioneers of modern medicine: "Between animal and human medicine there is no dividing line — nor should there be. Diseases and the reactions to them must be studied on the basis of all medicine."

This "one medicine" concept of Virchow could hold the key to a more responsive health care system in the Philippines.

Email: mtan@inquirer.com.ph

Balintawak or Pugad Lawin?

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WELL OVER two decades ago, the late National Artist Nick Joaquin, in his humorous column "Small Beer," argued repeatedly for a return to the traditional "Cry of Balintawak." All our textbooks, following a resolution from the National Historical Commission, state that the start of the Revolution against 1896 was triggered by the cry of Pugad Lawin led by Andres Bonifacio in Pugad Lawin, Quezon City. The issue is not just historiographical but political. If the National Historical Commission, upon review of the facts, reverses its earlier resolution and moves the site of the "Cry" back to Balintawak, then the shrine in Pugad Lawin in Quezon City in Caloocan. Mayor Herbert Bautista's line will be Mayor Recto Echiverri's gain.

Re-opening the issue looks simple because people think it's just like tossing a coin to decide between Balintawak or Pugad Lawin. If you bring two to three historians together you would not get a consensus.

To the above opinion, you must add other contenders to the historical site: Kangkong, Balara Tres, Pasong Tamo, Bantay and God knows where else, depending on the primary source being cited.

If you have been following the debate, look again. The date declared by the National Historical Commission as the start of the Philippine Revolution—Aug. 23, 1896—is but one date proposed, the others being Aug. 20, 24, 25 and 26, 1896. And, if I remember from a historical forum in '98 who officially even named on a weekend date of Sept. 3, 1896!

All these debates on dates and places, which may seem trivial to the general public, is the lifeblood of historians.

Teodoro A. Agoncillo said that Bonifacio scheduled the grand attack of the Katipunan for Aug. 24, 1896, the Feast of San Bartolome, in Malabon. This date was chosen to enable Katipuneros to pass security checkpoints carrying their bolos because Bonifacio is famous for masterminding a long Madrid zarzuela called "Sangharilaya." Bonifacio and his men were in Balintawak on August 19. They left Balintawak for Kangkong on August 23, and on the afternoon of August 24 they proceeded to Pugad Lawin. The next day, August 25, is the feast of Juan Tamad, son of Meldrum Aquino, better known as "Tandang Sora," the Katipunera who turned in the roaring epoch of Bonifacio, cure their enemies, and served to fight.

Teodoro Agoncillo mentioned the National Historical Commission to move the traditional August 26 date to Aug. 23 and transfer the historical site from Balintawak to Pugad Lawin. If Agoncillo's personality wasn't enough for the Commission, he cited as his principal source, Dr. Pio Valenzuela, a close associate of Bonifacio.

I wonder if other members of the commission bothered to consult Agoncillo that Valenzuela may have been in Bonifacio's inner circle, but may be unreliable as a primary source. In Wenceslao Emilio's Spanish compilation of historical documents, Archivo del Katipunan Filipino, Valenzuela's supposed testimony before Spanish interrogators dated September 1896 stated that the City of Balintawak was held in Balintawak on Aug. 30, 1896. Years later, in his memoirs published in English after World War II, Valenzuela stated that the City was actually held in Pugad Lawin on Aug. 29, 1896. Agoncillo explained that the September 1896 account was extracted from Valenzuela's earlier diaries and couldn't be trusted.

Balintawak was the place determined by Guillermo and many eyewitness accounts, including Guillermo Masangkay who, in an interview in the Sunday Tribune in 1932, declared the place in Balintawak and the date Aug. 26, 1896. Spanish Lt. Hergara Diaz in 1896 pinpointed the place as Balintawak but placed the date on Aug. 24, 1896.

Depending on your source, the dates and places are not as exact as we think.

In 1928 Gregorio de Jesus Bulgar, widow of Andres Bonifacio, wrote a short autobiography, entitled "Mga tala ng aking buhay," where she stated, among other things, that the City of Balintawak took place on Aug. 23, 1896 in Pasong Tamo! This place isn't in Balintawak but in Pugad Lawin. Her husband's last encounter with the Spaniards was just down the street! Crying was covered in the issue, the Lakumbini of the Katipunan.

To complicate things further, another Bonifacio associate, the composer of the Katipunan, Julio Nakpil, wrote a book titled "Cry of Balintawak," disputed his handwritten notes on the Philippine Revolution in the National Library under "Isolation M. Rabaya in 1918. Here he wrote, "assuring before God and before history that everything in these notes is the truth" ("The revolution started in Balintawak on the night of August 19, 1896.") See another page he wrote, "Bonifacio retired the first cry of war against tyranny on Aug. 24, 1896." It's really he remembered that "the first cry of Balintawak was in Aug. 26, 1896 in the place called Kangkong, adjacent to Pasong Tamo, within the jurisdiction of Caloocan, then within the province of Manila."

Now, which of these three declarations do we choose? Last but not least, we have hearings at seven whose memoirs identify the place as Balintawak and the date as Aug. 25, 1896. There are also those who claim that there was no battle, that it was peaceful, and "more symbolic evidence can be presented, let's just stick to Pugad Lawin and Aug. 23, 1896.

Comments are welcome in the Facebook Ano Nga.

Right path also calls for end to rights violations

POLICE AND military operatives must be reformed and punished under Republic Act (RA) 9745, the Anti-Torture Act of 2009.

The cell phone video footage shows an AWOL (Absent without official leave) marine being ordered allegedly by a community precinct commander named Senior Insp. Josefino Binayug inside a police station in Tondo, Manila, and the reports on the torture of five suspected rebels Lenin Dolar, Roberto Tolo, Jose Gomez, Daniel Nuevo, and Jerry Bustamante in San Fernando, Pampanga, by Sgt. Mudzgard Mohammad, commander of the police's provincial public safety company (Supcom, 08/09/17), are clear violations of RA 9745.

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) expresses outrage over the savage use of torture by the police and calls on the government to refrain from their pious affirmations when news have surfaced in such a despicable practice. These "crimes in uniform" have to be relieved to prevent them from muddling the investigation of their cases.

In another torture case, policemen SPO2 Aiple Mikaferro (detailed to Regional Intelligence & Detective Management Division, Region III) and SPO1 Israel Lacsinges (detailed at the municipal police station of Aloha), Santiagani province) presented torture victim Arnor Rivera into signing an affidavit of admission without the assistance of a counsel and prior consultation with his family, in an attempt to frustrate the victim's quest for justice.

There are many incidents

HACIENDA LUISITA farmers in a demonstration calling for the scrapping of the exotic distribution option.

also call for the speedy drafting of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Anti-Torture Act so as to move our justice system victims and immediately remove the sense of impunity that encourages human rights violations.

It is imperative that the Commission on Human Rights fast-track the drafting of the IRR in the face of the continuing assault on the dignity of persons.

Let us remind and (instill) in the hearts and minds of our security forces that torture is prohibited at all times. This information we has no place in a civilized society. President Aquino should set an example by issuing a policy statement against torture and by making accountable not only savage officials but also superiors and other violators of human rights. (In "Memorial no more," Autogenic passes up depot ignoring the the righteous path, human rights should be respected.)

—EMMANUEL AMITAL
executive director
Task Force Detainees of The Philippines
(TFDP)
42 St. Mary St., Cubao, Quezon City

No washing of hands in Hacienda Luisita for President Aquino

WE DON'T think President Aquino should adopt a "hands-off policy" regarding the violence in Luisita since. That is no cleanly a non-issues the farmer beneficiaries of the hacienda and the members of Cojuangco clan which owns it and is loath to let things it is a no-no for the agrarian reform program under his administration. The members of the Hacienda Luisita have no a stated guarantee for the over 1 million hectares of land all over the country that have escaped the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) malfeasance.

Given that the President's family is the one involved in Hacienda Luisita, it is imperative that to clarify the government position on the issue to ward off any charges that he is protecting his family's interests. In fact, there should be no other position aside from the one taken by the government's Presidential agrarian Reform Council (PARC), which is the scrapping of the 1,000-stock distribution option (SDO) and to distribution of the 4,915 hectares of land covered by the CARP to the farmer-beneficiaries.

While there is talk that the PARC decision was manoeuvred by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to undermine the Aquino family's dare not contradict the President (their boss), it should be unveiled or unjustified. This is not another case of "midnight deal or appointment" under the former administration. Whatever was DARs motive, the decision is be seen right benefits thousands of our farmers and rural residents of Hacienda Luisita and affirms the spirit of the assembly Commission in relation to land reform.

The challenge President Aquino to demonstrate his leadership in this issue. There is no such thing as a "family curse" against noble intentions. He should show the people that there will be no more dancing small residence in his administration.

REX BALDEMOR, secretary-general
member, Partido Lakas ng Masa (PaM)
23 Gilkison St., Project 4, Quezon City

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
Manila, Philippines

NOTICE OF APPLICATION

...

Rovas deserves vote of thanks for protest

LORENZ HEZI presidential candidate Ilue Rovas in doing the country a commendable service by filing an electoral protest over his loss to then President Ageenar Binay, since former Rep. Sol. Jr. Gerard's withdrawal, as one of the Rovas Committee on Electoral Reforms in the 16th Congress, of his endorsement of the surgery of Democratic Dilil's automated voting system in the May 9, 16 elections, a review of Smartmatic-TIM's performance is in order. This deserves the task of the Commission on Elections.

But with the scandals over their previous poor processes tarnishing it and the process now no resolutions as a myriad of issues...one...electoral process relating to alleged vote buying particularly involving the Supreme Court justices associated with former Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo—it is doubtful if the honorable commissioners will have the composure and clarity of mind for such an undertaking.

Rovas' protest will not only up his chances indeed, once it is passed and deserves the deserved body's utmost cooperation, regardless of the outcome, the electorate owes Rovas a vote of thanks.

—C. FUGANIST JR., rosefalcasan@yahoo.com

Unfriendly passenger terminals in Cebu, Manila

IS it comfort taking up too low degree, I was a resident of Manila from 1992 to 1996. Whenever I come home to Cebu or vice versa back to Manila, I would take a ship of the Sulpicio Lines and/or the Kapatagan. Back then, I saw the sad state of our shipping industry and I have disorganized and dirty the ports of Cebu and Manila were. Later, I saw real improvements in these ports, especially in terms of orderliness and cleanliness. The data I only stands the environs.

Last month was my first time after 1996 to go to Manila by boat. I was naive my brother who was supposed by moving to Manila for his service. We had loads of things to bring with us. So, travelling by boat was less expensive for us. We were in for disproved.

Upon disembarking from the ship at Pier 15 (Sta. Macapagal-Duperrey Terminal), one would easily see how clean and orderly it was, unlike before. But that was where the good part stopped.

Obviously, pre-automotive had introduced policies that made the terminal less friendly to passengers; necessarily we had foreigners travelling with us.

There were a stretch of 600 meters, more or less, from the dock to the gate. We had to put our things on improvised carts to where we could get our ride, which was outside the gate because vehicles were no longer allowed to enter the terminal. The perfect could no longer assist us because it was against policy; they could only carry luggage from the ship down to the dock below. But they may not go further.

This was not the case in the 1990s when porters were allowed to carry luggage up to the waiting vehicles. Adding to our inconveniences, approximately 20 meters before the gate, the guards told us to unload our things and leave the carts. We had 13 bags and carry most of them hastily and other heavy stuff. We had to hand-carry them outside because carts could not enter the terminal. That was more unkind and inconsiderate on the part of the guards.

Why does it have to be this way? Why can't they now apply the same system at the airport where cabs are allowed to enter the terminal complex and passengers line up for their turn to get a taxi, whose number is then revealed by the guards together with the passenger's name and destination?

I wonder why they rushed into find it difficult to maintain a passenger friendly system; I hope they are not blinded by "e-Zeal mentality." Unfair to ship passengers does dared to passenger friendly terminals as much as those travelling by air and to be treated without any distinction at all as to the socioeconomic class they belong to.

—EMILIO VINCENT C. FREIVAL
cpfrei@yahoo.com

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EVERY THURSDAY IN INSIDER LIBRE

5-member body starts marathon 3-day probe

From page A1

missed for robbery and extortion.

Magtibay has since been relieved as chief of the Manila Police District (MPD).

Also summoned today were police negotiators and some MPD officials involved in the bloody police assault captured live by international TV networks that sparked outrage in China and Hong Kong and dismay among Filipinos over the government's ineptness.

Thorough and fair

"We are expecting the investigators to go smoothly and we are expecting a report of a thorough, fair and full investigation," Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Liu Jianchao told reporters yesterday following a 40-minute meeting with De Lima.

"I hope we see the results as soon as possible so that the (Hong Kong) people and the relatives of the victim(s) will have an effective and efficient investigation ... will help us in getting better prepared for a similar incident," Liu said.

"Our main objective is the truth will come out and parties responsible will be held accountable for their actions," said Commonwealth Secretary Hermilando Coloma.

He expressed hopes that the inquiry would "bring about closure to an unfortunate incident and will enable our country to move on."

De Lima's committee has local government Secretary Jesse Robredo as vice chair and representatives from the Commission on Human Rights, the Ombudsman, Department of Foreign Affairs-Bureau of Consular Affairs and Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

'Dirty Harry'

Mayor Lim, a former Manila police chief known as the Philippine version of movie detective "Dirty Harry" headed the hostage-crisis management committee until Tuesday and Robredo is a member.

Calls for Robredo's sacking and his withdrawal from the investigation because his department supervises the PNP have been dismissed by the Palace officials who said they recognize only the chief of the unarmed Mr. Aquino-in-law, the police matters.

De Lima said she expected to submit a report to the President in two weeks.

Hong Kong forensic experts also are here to help in conducting a parallel investigation.

Hearings will continue tomorrow and Monday, when a reenactment of the shooting inside the bus seized by Mendoza will be held. The main witness there will be Alberto Lidasan, driver of the van who escaped unscathed.

Also to appear on Monday is the "mystery woman" who accompanied Mendoza to her van in Intramuros, where he commandeered the bus. She was reported to have also talked on Mendoza's family hotel in Binondo.

Victims to give testimony

De Lima said that she had received word that two of the hostage victims were now willing to give their statements in Philippine authorities after initially declining due request to be interviewed, saying they had suffered enough "psychological trauma."

She said her panel might send a team to talk to the victims in Hong Kong, if necessary.

The National Bureau of Investigation yesterday continued to receive testimony for evaluation of the De Lima committee.

GMA-7 broadcaster Mike Enriquez and reporter Susan Enriquez and Michael Eguia now recuperating in the NBI headquarters for details of their statements were not revealed following a gag order by De Lima.

Media role in bloodbath

Reporting by GMA-7 of the arrest of Mendoza's brothers, MPD Gregorio Medalera, was seen on the hijacked bus TV monitor and prompted the abductor to open fire on his hostages, according to police and news reports from the scene at the time.

The blow-by-blow media reports of the hostage drama have prompted calls for investigation of the role of radio and TV coverage in the carnage.

Sept. Nelson Febut, who has been relieved as head of the Manila police department next became his presence at the scene was unauthorized, also sent to the NBI to give his statement.

The deputy hostage negotiator, Chief Insp. Romeo Salvador, Mariano reclaimed to the NBI office yesterday to conclude his testimony.

Other personalities whose statements have been obtained by the NBI were Magtibay, Radio Mindanao Network broadcaster, and Bone, "The woman who reportedly drew Mendoza from his hideaway house in Fort Andrago-in-Intramuros. With reports from Christine S. Avendaño, Jeannette I. Andrade in Manila, Marlar P. Cinco and Marvel Della C. Lumba, Inquirer Southern Luzon

DEADLINE Justice Secretary Leila de Lima tells reporters on Thursday that the inquiry into the Aug. 23 hostage-taking that left eight Hong Kong tourists dead will be completed in Sept. 6.

BULLET SHELLS Lt/Gen/Wak, a member of the Hong Kong Police Control for Aviation Security, is held at the Manila airport after empty shells from an M16 Armalite rifle were recovered from his luggage. Li failed to produce clearance from the PNP to transport evidence but he was later allowed to depart.

MEDIA COVERAGE Broadcast personalities Mike Enriquez and Susan Enriquez (no relation) arrive at the National Bureau of Investigation headquarters in Manila on Thursday morning to explain their coverage of the hostage drama.

HOPE FLOATS Tourism Secretary Alberto Lim speaks at the opening day of the Philippine Travel Exchange attended by 350 foreign delegates and 194 representatives of the local tourism industry.

Gov't sees 10% drop in HK tourist arrivals

From page A1

In a statement, the country's flag carrier said its losses were based on 1,200 unrested bookings from Hong Kong and other parts of China.

Speaking to reporters in Davao City, Domingo Dantes, PAL vice president for Mindanao, said on Wednesday the "situation is just temporary and will see studies in the future."

Dantes said PAL suffered re-bookings for its Davao-Hong Kong flights. There were no cancellations but passengers moved their flights to later dates, he said.

"The effect of the (Quirino) transferred hostage bloodbath is not severely felt in Davao City," Dantes added.

PAL said that despite the losses and negative travel advisories, it would continue to operate regular flights to Hong Kong.

Dantes said PAL still considered China its biggest market.

Goodwill

Coloma said the government is hopeful that more Hong Kong tourists would visit the Philippines after a Philippine team investigating the botched hostage rescue shall have concluded its work.

"We're hoping that as the investigation winds down, so we are able to reassure the findings on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, to the Chinese government, that there will be a better understanding on both sides of what happened and there will be more and more fair goodwill and friendship to be rebuilt and strengthened," he said.

Bad picture

The hostage crisis has painted a very bad picture of the country abroad, a representative of the European Union to the Philippines said yesterday.

"I think an event of that intense happening anywhere in the world certainly casts a very dark cloud over the image of that country," Ambassador Alistair MacDonald, head of the European Commission delegation in the Philippines, told reporters.

MacDonald said "bad things" such as the one that befell the Chinese tourists in Manila could happen anywhere in the world.

He said he was confident that the Philippines would overcome this negative image since good doings started to come into place, or when the government could better cope in the future to deal with the kind of crisis.

He said the European Union was looking forward to hearing the results of the investigation.

Reports from Norman Bordadora and Cynthia S. Balloon in Manila, and Jude Quiroz, Inquirer Mindanao

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1M poor families to get gov't cash aid

From page A1

schools must receive deworming treatment at least twice a year.

Started under Arroyo

"We are thankful for the 4Ps's approval for a $400-million loan for the expansion of the National Pantawid Pilipino Program," Soliman said at a press briefing.

Since the program started under the Arroyo administration in 2008, about 900,000 families have received cash incentives from the government, she said.

"This is very timely as the DSWD (Department of Social Welfare and Development) will increase the number of families receiving monthly cash grants to 2.3 million by the end of 2011. The addition of funding will go a long way in expanding the reach and coverage of the program," Soliman said.

The program is aimed at encouraging the poorest families to send their children to school and seek regular health care.

RESIDENTS of this depressed neighborhood in Tondo, Manila, are among the likely beneficiaries of government financial assistance.

Most vulnerable families

By giving out cash incentives, the government and the 4Ps hope to ease the family's income as well as improve children's health and school performance, officials said.

Soliman said the project would "help the most vulnerable families move out of their vulnerabilities."

"Conditional cash transfer programs have proven to be an effective way of keeping children healthier and in school. These programs help families break free from the cycle of poverty," Camille Soliman, 4Ps poverty reduction specialist, said at the joint briefing.

Under the program, families that meet the health conditions will receive P500 per month.

An additional P300 per child per month—with a maximum of P900 per month—is given to families who ensure that their children attend at least 85% of the school days.

ATM cards

The DSWD said it used the 2009 National Statistics Office Census data to identify the poorest families.

The DSWD and the ADB plan a national targeting system to monitor and verify the performance of the families to ensure that the money goes directly to the beneficiaries, Soliman said.

Government institutions like Land Bank of the Philippines and rural banks will be used to send the money to beneficiaries either through the ATM (automated teller machine) or over the counter.

Landbank will provide the beneficiaries with ATM cards for their withdrawals.

According to ADB data, one in five Filipino children does not go to primary school. Of those who do, three in 10 eventually drop out. These children also do not receive preventive health care.

$81,800 families

The Philippines is considered to be in a "permanent" in conditional cash transfer programs, which are also implemented in Brazil, Indonesia, and New York City.

Since the program was established in 2008, the government has spent about P12.9B in loans for nearly 900,000 families, Soliman said.

The ADB loan should provide direct financial support to 382,000 families in the next few months.

The new beneficiaries should receive their cash grants starting October, Soliman said.

ADB officials said they approved the loan—equivalent to about $1B—because they saw that the project was showing good results.

According to Soliman and the ADB, results from their monitoring showed "positive" improvements in the school attendance and the reduced prevalence of children in the program.

The loan is payable in 25 years, with a grace period of five years. The loan will also carry a "commitment charge" of 0.15 percent annually.

Fighting poverty

Nessy Acta, ADB country director for the Philippines, said the program has confidence that the loan aimed at helping the government move efficiently addresses poverty.

Acta said the cash transfer program was an efficient way to invest in human capital.

"For the Philippines, investing in human capital is necessary given that the economy is services or remote," Acta said.

"The program is necessary to help address poverty, although this should be complemented by efforts to increase investments and increase job opportunities."

The ADB said the program had been proven to uplift the lives of poor families in other countries.

"The project helps families escape poverty while ensuring young people have better opportunities for advancement," Habacon said.

ADB said intensifying the program would eventually address inherited poverty to poverty reduction, improvement in maternal health, and education of poor children.

The Philippines, which ranked a third of the population — of about 94 million — live in poverty, is aiming to halve the incidence of poverty by 2015 under the Millennium Development Goals. With reports from *Reuters* and *Inquirer Research*

What Went Before: Food-for-School Program

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo launched a Food-for-School Program (FSP) on early November 2004 as part of its response to a Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showing that more 3M spirits were going hungry.

According to the survey results, 3M families or 15% of the country's total households of every seven household heads (31.1 percent) said they had nothing to eat at least once in the past three months. This incidence of hunger nationwide rose at the same time to unemployment rate, which began mounting longer in 1998.

Under the FSP, each pupil was given one kilogram of rice "fortified with nutrients" to take home each school day. The program initially targeted public schools in Metro Manila, Cavite, Bulacan and Rizal, which showed the highest dropout rates in Grades 1 and 2 and the highest level of malnutrition among its students.

In February 2005, the program was extended to eight more Mindanao provinces. Census officials said the FSP was originally planning to be more of a handout than a relief to journeys and teachers rise to poor families.

The GDA said P46.9 million worth of rice (or 1.6 million kg) was delivered by the National Food Authority to drop-off points "selected at will" by division personnel, contrary to an agreement between the NFA and Department of Education that the food agency should ensure the rice was delivered directly to the schools.

In a report, students, parents and school officials had to spend personal money to transport the rice sacks from the drop-off points to their schools. Much of the staple the beneficiaries received was also of "poor quality."

In July this year, Soliman, the current social welfare secretary in President Aquino, said the new administration was reviewing the abolition of the program following the discovery that not all of the food supplies were reaching the students. Alisa Ilustrisima, *Inquirer Research*

Source: *Inquirer* Archives

7th National Peace Consciousness Month

"People Power at the Heart of the Peace Process"

Benigno S. Aquino III
President of the Republic of the Philippines

As we mark the National Peace Consciousness Month, I extend my warmest greeting of peace to the entire Filipino nation.

September is a momentous month in our history as it carries important landmarks in our pursuit for a just and lasting peace. We look back to the peace accords that we forged with the Cordillera People's Liberation Army twenty-four years ago and with the Moro National Liberation Front fourteen years ago. Each year, in this month, we celebrate these pacts which became cornerstones upon which we continue to build a more peaceful and progressive society. And as we recall this historical era, we acknowledge the people – from within the government and without – who have taken the strong stand to set our course towards peace.

This theme for this year's celebration, "People Power at the Heart of the Peace Process," recognizes the power of the Filipino people to steer the peace process in the right direction. I believe that all the strengths that we have achieved would not have been possible if not for the peaceful efforts of peace advocates from the communities, from Peace Zones to civil society, and from the churches, campuses and Tri-Media sectors. Integrity, good will, and the power of positive dialogue. Your sincerity demonstrated through actual work proved to the delegates, combatants and other parties for peace the potential in a very concrete sense to realize our work for peace and development.

"Kapit-bisig upang itaguyod." The peace process is for you and should be by all of us. As long as we have ownership of it, our collective voices will resonate to maintain for peace. We will remain true-blue and be found through responsive governance.

As we remember the landmark events of the past this September, let us look forward to forthcoming developments, particularly in the revival of the talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, that we are to take place this month.

Our people have for so long been shackled not only by violence, but also by the insecurity, ignorance, and paralysis that arises from violence. We have finally embarked on a journey of transformation and this is a journey that necessarily entails that all the investments of every Filipino. The future we envision is bright. Many more stakeholders from the private and civil sectors, and from the government, are enthused to participate in the peacemaking venues to pursue the peace process. Together, let us break barriers and foster gains that will surely be remembered as the real peace dividends to come.

Peace be with us all.

BENIGNO S. AQUINO III

Teresita Quintos-Deles
Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process

The month of September marks the celebrations of the National Peace Consciousness Month as we seek to build greater awareness and understanding of the comprehensive peace process that aims to address the root causes of armed conflict and social violence in the Philippines.

We embrace this year's theme, "People Power at the Heart of Peace Process", as a way of acknowledging the collective effort of the Filipino people in pushing the peace process forward. We have witnessed major accomplishments in the peace processes since the time of President Cory Aquino. They have a tripartite wave signed for the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), respectively. There were likewise significant negotiations for peaceful settlements with other groups, reintegration of rebels, and the development of their communities. Efforts have been made to move from both aspect of armed conflict to conflict-ridden areas. Through all of these, we recognize the fact that this will not be possible without the synergy of many and actions made by government, civil society and every advocates through the conduct of public consultations and consensus building measures.

The new Aquino administration is at the more committed to ensure the stability of the State and the security of our nation, with the ultimate goal of securing the safety and well-being of the people. We will focus on areas of governance, delivery of basic services in conflict-affected areas, economic development and sustainable development and security sector reform as the basic guidelines in the implementation of our National Security Policy. Our aim is to have put settlements of conflicts at the core of comprehensive and shared understandings of the root causes of the problem through the formulation of a holistic and mutually agreed upon policies.

As the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, I remain steadfast in my commitment to ensure the peace process not only through the negotiating table, but through its sustained and multi-track approaches. New mechanisms/offices put in place to ensure a more participatory, transparent and accountable peace process.

The path to peace will be long and challenging. But with our collective efforts and initiatives combined with our desire to have genuine and lasting peace, we will be empowered to put an end to these conflicts. There it will be a people peace for peace!

TERESITA QUINTOS-DELES

CENSEP's peace partners are also celebrating the National Peace Consciousness Month through various activities around the country. To know more about these, log on to www.censep.gov.ph

CALENDAR OF PEACE MONTH EVENTS

EVENT	DATE
15th Anniversary of the Commencement of Peace Talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front (NDFP)'s Peace Negotiators	September 1	The Final Peace Agreement between the government and the NDFP was signed on September 1, 1995 during the term of former President Fidel V. Ramos.
Launching of the 7th National Peace Consciousness Month	September 1 (Wed) 9:00 AM Rizal Park Wilay Gardens (Open Grounds) Quirino Grandstand, Manila	In line with Proclamation No. 477 declaring September as the National Peace Consciousness Month to be celebrated annually, and Executive Order No. 570 directing all government agencies and local government units to participate in the celebration of the month-long activities.
15th Anniversary of the Commencement of the Republic of the Philippines and the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA) Talks	September 15	The GRP-CPLA Alliance accord was signed by Nonoy Librado Espina and former President Corazon Aquino on September 15, 1995 in Tabuk, Mountain Province of Kalinga.
CENSEP's 10th Year Anniversary	September 15	Creation of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process through Executive Order No. 125.
Launching of "Save Local Government Units Campaign" by the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)	September 15	The mandate for the campaign specifically emphasizes the need for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to promote and disseminate knowledge and understanding of respect for and strict observance of international humanitarian law.
Celebration of the International Day of Peace" by the Secretary-General of the United Nations	September 21 (Thu) 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Quirino Grandstand, Rizal Park, Manila	Information Board, one of CENSEP's peace partners, will spearhead the celebration of September 21 as International Day of Peace with the theme's use as a new "Campaign Against Violence and Terrorism" (CAVT). Various activities to highlight the peace and conflict resolution efforts of the government and civil society will be undertaken on this "Peace Month".
Proposed Launch of "People Power for Peace" by CENSEP	September 21 (Thu) 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Quirino Grandstand, Rizal Park, Manila	CENSEP has supported this yearly celebration with various peace-related activities. Among these are peace caravans, peace camps, peace concerts, peace conferences, peace exhibits, peace marches, peace rallies, peace seminars, peace workshops, and the like.

ebf
ECUMENICAL BISHOPS FORUM
3/F NCCP Building, 879 Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue, West Triangle, Quezon City
Phone/Telefax: 423-3308 E-mail: ecumenicalbishops@yahoo.com

August 11, 2010

THE HON. SECRETARY LEILA DE LIMA
Secretary of Justice
Department of Justice
Padre Faura, Manila

Dear Secretary De Lima,

"My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places" (Isaiah 32:18)

September 6, 2009 was a day of gloom for the people of God of the Diocese of Catarman as well as for the Peace Advocates of Samar. This was the day when Fr. Cecilio Lucero, the Parish Priest of Catubig and Human Rights Desk Officer of the Diocese, was brutally ambushed along the National Highway of San Jose, Northern Samar while on his way to his parish. Since then, various civil society and church groups came out to manifest strong condemnation of the gruesome murder, and jointly call for its immediate investigation and resolution.

We appreciate very well your coming over to Calbayog City last year to conduct a Public Hearing on the series of Human Rights violations in Samar, as well as your kind attention given to Fr. Lucero's case, in which you immediately recommended the filing of the case at the Department of Justice. Since then there has been 4 preliminary investigations to the case at the DOJ in Manila.

Few weeks from now, it will be a year since the incident happened. And as time passes by, we cannot but have some apprehensions and doubts as to whether we can attain justice for Fr. Cecilio Lucero especially that some local 'powers that be,' whom we perceive to be with the side of the Respondents, continue to exert every effort possible to derail or dismiss the case even at the Prosecution level.

In view of this apprehensions, we, the Assembly of the East Visayas Ecumenical Bishops Forum, a gathering of multi-sectoral and inter-denominational Peace Advocates in Samar, Leyte and Masbate, would like to make an appeal to your good office for the just and speedy resolution of the case.

We humbly manifest our appeal to you Madame Secretary, for we know very well your good sense of fairness and justice, as well as your personal commitment to the case when this matter was still under your care at the CHR.

With our continued prayers for you and your advocacies, and for the interest of Peace and Justice for those who are deprived, we remain

Respectfully yours,

Sgd.
BISHOP Dulce Pia Rose
East Visayas Jurisdictional Area

Sgd.
Rev. Dominador T. Dulfer, Jr.
Conference Minister
South West Leyte Conference
United Church of Christ in the Philippines

Sgd.
Msgr. Walter A. Cerbito
Diocese of Catarman

Sgd.
Rev. Noel O. Bato
Conference Minister, NELCCON
United Church of Christ in the Philippines

Sgd.
Pastor Rodin L. Moergal
United Church of Christ in the Phils.
Matagangsing, Placer, Masbate

Sgd.
Rev. Fr. Fernando M. Bagtong
Diocese of Catarman

Sgd.
Rev. Jerome C. Baris
SIDC
United Church of Christ in the Phils.

Sgd.
Rev. Edgar D. Dulfo
Leyasan Eastern Samar
United Church of Christ in the Philippines

Sgd.
Fr. Noel C. Lubenda
Diocese of Calbayog

Sgd.
Sr. Ma. Elaine Cabrera, FHL
Franciscan Housemaids of the Lord
Palo, Leyte

Sgd.
Rev. Eutropio E. Delva
Convenor, UCCP-UCWD
East Visayas Jurisdictional Area

Sgd.
Rev. Butch Bagulo
UCCP-SWLC

Sgd.
Crescenciano P. Jansoojop
Nativity Parish
Roman Catholic Church
Tacloban, Leyte

Sgd.
Rev. Fr. Pio A. Aquiatan
Diocese of Catarman

Sgd.
Rev. Jerby A. Salor
Conference Minister
North-West Samar Conference

Sgd.
Sr. Amparo Salarda, OSB
Palo, Leyte

Sgd.
Rev. Irma Mepica-Bolalas
UCCP-EVJA
Tacloban City

Sgd.
Channaine P. Villacarillo
Palo, Leyte

Sgd.
Pastor Lee Cebubig
UCCP-East Visayas Jurisdictional Area
Tacloban City

Sgd.
Bro. Alvin de Guzman, OFM
OFM-JPIC Director
For Visayas and Mindanao

Sgd.
Rladiella V. Echivarre
Lay Forum Philippines-Visayas

Sgd.
Bishop Elmer M. Bolocon
Executive Secretary, EBF

August 10, 2010

The Honorable Secretary LEILA DE LIMA
Department of Justice

Madam Secretary,

This has reference to the case of one of my priests, Fr. Cecilio P. Lucero of the Diocese of Catarman, who was brutally murdered along the National Highway of San Jose, Northern Samar last September 6, 2009 while on his way back to his parish to celebrate the Sunday Mass. We have already brought this case to your attention when you went to Calbayog City last year to investigate the spate of killings in Samar while you were still Chair of the Commission on Human Rights.

Former Congressman Wilmar Lucero, brother of the late Fr. Lucero, has filed a case before the Department of Justice last March against those who allegedly masterminded and carried out the barbaric murder. There have already been around four hearings for arraignment in the prosecutor's office in Manila. I have also been informed that there have been attempts by some of the accused to have the case transferred to Northern Samar where they feel they can exert influence over the courts. So, too, is their delaying tactic to keep postponing the trial.

It will exactly be a year now since the gruesome incident happened and the people and clergy of the Diocese of Catarman keep on wondering as to whether this high-profile murder will just end up on the list of unsolved killings in the province for the culture of impunity to reign unabated.

We were given much hope with your appointment as Secretary of Justice because of your unwavering effort as Chair of the Commission on Human Rights. Now we know that under your administration, you will expedite the prosecution and trial so as to resolve the case with dispatch and obtain justice for Fr. Cecilio Lucero as expected by our people from this no-nonsense government of President Noynoy Aquino.

I therefore, make this direct appeal to your good office and the Department of Justice for resolute attention and swift action on this lagging case.

With gratitude to you and with my every good wish and blessing, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ EMMANUEL C. TRANCE, D.D.
Bishop of Catarman

POLICE LINE Montgomery County police officers contain off the area near the Discovery Channel building during a hostage situation in Maryland on Wednesday. AP/FBI

Discovery Channel hostage-taker killed

From page A1

Holder shot the gunman when he pointed his pistol at one of his hostages.

"A hostage moved, he pulled his gun, and a shot was taken," Montgomery County police chief Tom Manger told reporters.

Acting alone

An explosive device on the gunman's body detonated in a cloud of smoke when police shot him, Manger said. Police were trying to determine whether two bombs and two bodysuits the gunman had carried into the building also contained explosives.

A law enforcement official, speaking on condition of anonymity because the investigation was ongoing, said authorities had identified Lee as the likely gunman.

Police and firefighters on Wednesday night looked at a laptop screen that showed an image of a body lying face up, surrounded by blood. Authorities also sent in a robot to detonate explosives on the gunman's body.

Police said the man had fired his gun at least once. They believed the gunman was acting alone but were investigating all possibilities.

Area sealed off

Police sealed off the area around the building and SWAT teams deployed shortly after the gunman entered the building carrying a handgun at about 1 p.m. County and state police, FBI and Homeland Security agents joined the operation.

The hostage saga brought one of Washington's largest and busiest suburbs to a standstill for hours.

Lee, a radical environmentalist, was convicted of disorderly conduct for a protest he organized outside the Discovery Channel's offices in February 2008.

According to court records, he paid homeless people to carry signs and set off a scramble when he threw $20,000 into the air, yelling to "just touch."

Lee served two weeks in jail after his arrest. He was also ordered to stay 330 meters (1000 feet) away from Discovery headquarters as part of his probation, and to pay a small fine.

'I have bombs'

NBC News reported that after its producers called Discovery's general number, someone identifying himself as James J. Lee got on the phone and said he had a gun and several bombs.

"I have several bombs strapped to my body ready to go off. I have a device that if I drop it, if I drop it, it will ... explode," the man told NBC.

He said he built the bombs in about three weeks. "I did a lot of research. I had to experiment," he said.

Police kept the gunman talking by telephone almost the whole time. He went from being agitated to being calm, Manger said.

The hostages just happened to have been in the lobby and were kept lying on the floor by the gunman, he said.

180 countries

More than an hour after the gunman was shot, streets and alleyways around the sprawling glass and silver Discovery building were clogged with dozens of police vehicles, bomb-disposal trucks and ambulances.

Pedestrians stared silently as sweating snipers unloaded their rifles and stripped off bullet-proof vests.

Discovery Communications says it reaches 1.6 billion subscribers in more than 180 countries with the Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, Science Channel and Planet Green networks.

Lee, who had his own Save The Planet protest site, admitted on a webpage attributed to him he had a gripe with the Discovery Channel, which it denies for its reliable documentaries as well as military and survivalist programs.

He had protested outside their offices in the past, and his list of demands included that the cable station "broadcast to the world their commitment to save the planet."

Lee's demands

Lee insisted that the Discovery Channel cease promoting war and weapons of mass destruction through its technology programming, and promote ascend to call immigration.

Its court and online, he faulted the Discovery Channel for shows on as varied as "Future Weapons," "It Takes a Thief" and "Planet Green."

A lengthy posting that could be seen on Wednesday on a website registered to Lee said Discovery and its affiliates should stop "encouraging the birth of any more parasitic human infants," a possible reference to shows like "Baby Place II" and "19 Kids and Counting."

"Civilization must be exposed for the filth it is. Thus, send all its disgusting religious-cultural roots and proof," he said to one cause.

"Broadcast this message until the pollution in the planet is reversed and the human population goes down! This is your obligation. If you think it isn't, then get the hell off the planet!"

No more babies

Unchecked population growth was a theme sounded time and time again in Lee's postings.

"Saving the Planet means saving what's left of the nonhuman Wildlife by decreasing the Human population," he said. "That means stopping the human race from breeding any more disgusting human babies!"

Discovery Channel spokesperson David Leavy said the station's security teams were familiar with Lee but had not considered him a threat because his views were so outrageous.

Leavy said all employees had been reconnected but "we're relieved that it ended without any harm to our employees," he said. *Reports from AP, New York Times, Bloomberg, Reuters and AFP*

HK lawmakers demand apology, money from RP

HONG KONG—Hong Kong lawmakers yesterday passed a motion demanding that the Philippine government apologize and pay compensation to the families of eight Hong Kong tourists killed in a hostage bloodbath in Manila.

The deaths, after an 11-hour ordeal broadcast live on television around the world, triggered outrage in Hong Kong over the mishandling of the crisis and calls for an investigation into whether the hostages were killed by police or the hijacker.

The lawmakers' motion, asked for a thorough investigation and expressed "strong dissatisfaction at the serious failures" of the Philippine authorities.

The motion also demanded "a public apology and compensation to the deceased and injured and their family members."

The lawmakers' motion, which is not binding on Hong Kong's government, did not specify any amount thought to be appropriate.

The Philippine government has admitted in making a number of errors in its handling of the crisis, which has chilled diplomatic ties between Hong Kong and managed the southeast Asian nation's tourism industry.

The Philippine government said that it intended to set up its own inquiry on Monday with the report to be submitted to Hong Kong authorities. AFP

3 bodies sent to wrong families

From page A1

ntured up.

In Manila, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman said she would investigate.

"If there was a mix-up of those names, we apologize," Soliman said. "It was really the desire to facilitate and bring the bodies to Hong Kong as quickly as possible because that will ease the pain of the families."

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, who is heading the hostage incident investigation, said the area statement of any misidentification.

"There is no such indication in the request that we received on Sig but we are always ready that," she said, adding that Hun could be part of the inquiry.

Bodies correctly labeled

Gwendolyn Pang, secretary general of the Philippine National Red Cross, said the victims' bodies were correctly labeled before they were sent to the funeral parlor. However, she could not verify if the ruffles had been properly tagged.

"They were identified in the hospitals by the (crime) agency and by the family members," Pang said.

"The family members claimed (the bodies) in the hospitals and then they were sent on for postmortems."

"As far as we are concerned, we review the labels carefully with the assistance of Bro Clarence Berbano," Harold Mesquid, curator of the St. Harold Funeral Parlor in Manila, told the Inquirer.

Outrage in Hong Kong

This wealthy southern Chinese financial hub has been simmering with anger over the deaths.

Hong Kong residents have been outraged that the Philippines Nathalie Prime handled negotiations with the hostagetaker, a former police officer sacking recommendation, as well as the rescue operation.

Hong Kong's chief executive denounced President Aquino as "arrant" in heated online messages.

Hong Kong's legislative Council was to discuss the tragedy in a special meeting later on Thursday amid rare calls a resolution declaring that the rescue operation suffered from "serious failures."

The backlash has also extended to mainland China. Thousands of Chinese tourists have canceled their flight and hotel bookings. Reports from AP, AFP and Jeannette I. Andrade

Robredo's confirmation at Commission on Appointments in peril

From page A1

Lacierda, Sonny Coloma and Ricky Carandang—would also have to face the committee, partly to explain matters such as the practice that includes three officials ranked as "secretary" with separate budgets.

He said the commission would begin work next week with the Palace appointees' submission of credentials.

"As long as the (chairs of all three teams) do their 'secretary' they should face the Commission on Appointments," Enrolero told reporters. "They can't have the title but not the responsibility and accountability attendant to their job."

The Commission on Appointments Group has members from seven bicameral committees that study in the President's team, including the conflicting statements from Coloma and Carandang on the issue of Hong Kong chief executive Donald Tsang's phone call in 99. Aquino at the height of the hostage crisis.

Enrolero also commented on a report that Lacierda had threatened to sue a TV-radio reporter for libel over her tweeting's negative stories about the Palace. Lacierda denied making such a threat.)

"No government official should be on this, demand media or criticism are concerned," she senator said. "My case is no one people to answer whatever question is thrown at us, however unfair we may think it is."

Dodging bullets

Asked if the hostage crisis had jeopardized Robredo's confirmation as interior secretary, Enrolero said: "I think we have issues of questions still waiting for answers.

"But it's good that we had a challenge like this early in President Aquino's term, so whatever thought their job was easy would not take it easy anymore."

He expressed the hope that those "appointed and trusted by the President would learn to accept responsibility and not dodge whatever bullet comes their way."

"In their effort to escape responsibility, that bullet might end up hitting the President," he said.

Enrolero said Robredo should have the "extra competence" in handling hostage crises by virtue of his position.

He pointed out that the two agencies involved in the Aug. 23 crisis—the Manila city government and the Philippine National Police—were under the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG).

Enrolero claimed to have been "misinformed" by Robredo's announcement that he had early on put Undersecretary Rico Puno in charge of police matters. Robredo, a long-time and reelected mayor of Naga City, supposedly preferred to concentrate on local governments.

The unusual assignment at the DILG surfaced after Robredo was criticized as lacking in leadership during the hostage crisis.

"This is one of the things he would have to clarify, not only in the investigation [of the hostage crisis] but, more importantly, before the Commission on Appointments," Enrolero said. "If he's not the secretary of the whole department, he might as well have a small part of the commission."

Asked if Robredo should step down, the senator said: "Resignation is a voluntary act on the part of the official. If it is imposed, it is no longer called resignation."

No cause

But the civil society group Kaya Natin! Movement for Good Governance and Ethical Leadership, of which Robredo is a member, said there was no cause for his resignation.

In a statement issued yesterday, Kaya Natin! said Ms. Aquino's recent remarks cleared Robredo of blame for the bungled rescue.

"In Ms. Aquino's statement, which was published in several major newspapers, he clearly said that he had made a previous arrangement for Secretary Robredo to focus on local government matters and designated Undersecretary Rico Puno to be more directly in charge of the PNP. Thus, it was Puno and not Robredo whom Ms. Aquino said was partly to blame for the botched response of the PNP," it said.

The group said it was supporting Ms. Aquino's move to convene the investigation of the hostage crisis under the leadership of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima and Robredo.

"We believe that persistent calls made by some of our government leaders for Robredo to resign from his position and/or to exhibit himself from the ongoing investigation are unjustifiable and baseless," Kaya Natin! said.

"We believe that a swift, fair and impartial investigation ... will help restore the credibility of our nation's government in the eyes of the international community," it said.

The statement was signed by Kaya Natin! members including former Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, Former Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca, Sen. Teofisto Guingona III, and former Bukidnon Rep. Nereo Acosta.

Through Puno's eyes

Coloma told Pazzo, like the other officials, suggested calm during the hostage crisis, reported the developments to Mr. Aquino.

"They were in close coordination with each other. President Aquino was monitoring [the situation] through Undersecretary Puno," Coloma said at yesterday's news briefing in Malacañang.

"All who were given assignments were reporting to [the President] periodically," he added.

Asked if Puno reported directly to the President as a matter of course, Coloma said: "No. 'Undersecretary' means a subordinate of the secretary, so he reports to Secretary Robredo... The term speaks for itself."

Coloma said Ms. Aquino respected "the proper delineation of responsibilities" among the Cabinet officials.

"The role of the undersecretary in any department is to support the secretary. So that is true for Undersecretary Puno [and] for every undersecretary. That is true for DILG and for the other departments," he said.

Credentials

In an interview last night with GMA 7, Puno said he was willing to step down if his services were no longer needed. "Kung di na ako kailangan, walang problema sa akin iyon."

Puno was then Senator Aquino's consultant at the Senate committee on public order and safety and on illegal drugs from 2007 to 2009.

In fact, he was "responsible for the successful senatorial campaign of Senator Aquino in 2007, as he was the overall ground commander during the said campaign," according to a profile provided by Malacañang.

He also served as a consultant of the Senate special oversight committee on economic affairs from 2008 until July 4 this year. As such, he worked closely with the military and police in connection with their requested budget appropriations and equipment.

Asked about Puno's qualifications in the field of law enforcement, Coloma said: "Well, his qualifications are along those lines."

"His background has more experience in the field of law enforcement. Trying to make it clear that it doesn't mean Secretary Robredo has no responsibility; I am just pointing out who has the primary responsibility."

Puno's profile showed that he was president of the Far East Bulletin Corp. from 1990 to 1995, "where he implemented policies for the improvement and development in the production of information."

He was said to have "strengthened the research and development department, which resulted in the creation of better quality Chinese, international and related products," and was also "instrumental in creating new markets for the products of the company as he opened to doors to the PNP and [the military]."

Puno was also an officer of the National Bangar Officers' Institute and the Philippine Practical Shoot-

ROBREDO: Out of the loop

PUNO: Point man

ing Association.

Mr. Aquino is a known gun enthusiast.

P-Noy 'not to blame'

Ex-President Joseph Estrada yesterday said Mr. Aquino should not be blamed for the hostage crisis.

He told the Inquirer that the President, in truth, was Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, head of the local crisis management committee, and police officials led by PNP Director General Jesus Versoza.

"He should resign," Estrada said of Versoza. "The President doesn't have to be at the scene of a hostage drama. That's why you have the chain of command. The fact that the PNP chief left at the height of the crisis was unacceptable."

Estrada said it was "possible" that the hostage drama would affect Mr. Aquino's true rating.

"But it's part of what you call governance," he said. "You encounter challenges that might crate or drag down your numbers." With a report from Alexis Romero

Assistant Editor Tony Hiwatig-Gloria

Across the NATION

Gunmen barge into class, take teacher

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Five gunmen barged into a classroom at a public elementary school in a Sulu town on Tuesday and seized a teacher, police said yesterday.

Chief Supt. Hermogenio Ling, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao police chief, identified the captive teacher as Ritchea Haron, at Gual East Elementary School.

Ling identified one of the five gunmen as a certain Bernardo Usara.

Ling said initial investigation indicated that the motive for the abduction was to force Haron into marrying one of the gunmen.

Officials of Indanan and of Barangay Asturbegan were negotiating for the release of the teacher.

In another case of abduction, the group that took a Muslim trader in Marawi City allowed its captive to talk to his wife by phone, according to police.

Ling said victim Abdulcarim Maguneng talked briefly with his wife to say he was okay.

Maguneng was a second abduction victim in Marawi City this year in cases that became a sign that kidnappers operating in Lanao del Sur are now targeting not only outsiders, but local residents as well.

In June, Haroldito Yusoph, a son of Ebrahima Commissioner Elias Yusoph, was kidnapped.

Yusoph's abductors demanded P5 million in ransom.

He was released a month later but authorities said no money changed hands.

Ling, meanwhile, said the search-and-rescue operation for Maguneng was encouraging but he declined to elaborate.

"We will implement a no-ransom policy," Ling said. Edwin Fernandez and Julie Alipala, *Inquirer Mindanao*

Zambo SWAT team head sacked over extort raps

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The commander of the city police's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team was sacked over allegations of extortion by cellular phone vendors.

Senior Supt. Edwin Hermosura, acting city police director, on Wednesday announced that Insp. Joel Nimat was relieved of his duties as SWAT commander.

Nimat, he said, is currently on "floating status" and is being investigated for allegedly extorting money from cell phone vendors.

Last week, cell phone vendors told the Inquirer that Nimat had been sending their text messages demanding P5,000 in weekly protection money.

The complainants said failure to cough up the money would be followed by raids on their stalls and seizure of their products.

Nimat has repeatedly denied the allegations.

Hermosura said the investigation would cover the entire SWAT force in the city.

He said investigators would use photos of information gathered from an earlier investigation made by the local office of the Commission on Human Rights.

Bettmer Jalbuni, one of the complaining cellular phone vendors, said the vendors welcomed Nimat's relief.

"We are just ordinary vendors but are today strengthened our courage to stop the extortion," he said.

Jalbuni said whenever vendors failed to cough up money for the police, the raids would come.

"It was like a run and money chase," he said. "We are always on the losing end whenever raids are conducted. Our items are confiscated and we could no longer get them back."

Sharon May Sabo, CHR officer in charge, said more complaints against Nimat and his men have reached her office. Julie Alipala, *Inquirer Mindanao*

DIRECT SELLING
A trader from Pangasinan patiently carries native bamboo silk products on the roads of Tandang, Quezon, hoping to make a living the hard-earned way. His other fellow Pangasinan vendors ply the same roads carrying products that they themselves crafted.

Ecleo denies killing his wife, uses alibi

By Jhermon Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Olongapo Island Rep. Ruben Ecleo Jr. denied killing his wife Alona in a testimony he made in court on Wednesday.

Ecleo, head of the cult Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA), was accused of killing his wife Alona on Jan. 1, 2002. He was presented by the defense in the trial presided over by Regional Trial Court Branch 15 Judge Bienvenido Reyes.

During his two-hour testimony, Ecleo reiterated his claim that the body dumped in a ravine in Dalaguete town, 80 km south of Cebu City, was not that of his wife.

He said Alona's height was 5'1" but that of the body found in the ravine was 5'5".

He also denied that he and his wife had a heated argument and that there was a commotion inside their bedroom in their house in Cebu Business Park, Barangay Guadalupe, Cebu City, prior to the killing of Alona.

As an alibi, Ecleo said he wasn't home on the night of the murder but was at the PBMA office in Talisay City.

But lawyer Fritz Quiñanola, a member of the prosecution panel, said he expected Ecleo to deny any role in his wife's murder.

"He was just wearing a fairy tale to court, well scripted and well rehearsed. His defenses of alibi cannot stand against the positive identification," Quiñanola told reporters after the court session.

Alona's brothers testified on May Ecleo surviving and bald, naked in the Ecleo couple's house on the night of the murder. Brother-in-law Alona also testified that he saw Ecleo near his car then saw a parked in the area where Alona's body was dumped.

Lawyer Alfredo Ripalda, another member of the prosecution panel, said the brothers of Alona had testified that Alona's height was 5'3" and the case against Ecleo isn't weakened by the medico-legal report stating that the body found in the ravine had a height of 5'5".

Quiñanola also said the brothers of Alona positively identified the body as that of their sister.

He also said there was an attempt by the Ecleo camp to take possession of the body but Alona's brothers refused to yield.

If the body wasn't that of Ecleo's wife, "why did he try to get it," Quiñanola said.

He said the direct testimony of Ecleo would continue on Oct. 6. He also gave assurances that the prosecution was ready to destroy all his alibis during cross-examination.

He said he and the other members of the prosecution panel, however, respected Ramonas and Ripalda would be ready to cross-examine Ecleo in the next hearing on Oct. 6.

Quiñanola also said the petition to cancel Ecleo's bail had been submitted for resolution.

War on private armies made tougher by pols–military

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Military and police officials in Western Mindanao and in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) said the involvement of politicians is making the war on private armies more difficult.

Lt. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, Western Mindanao Command chief, said on Tuesday the difficulty was more glaring in Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-tawi, which are all part of the ARMM.

"It's very hard really to dismantle private armed groups," Dolorfino said.

He said dismantling private armed groups also entail a lot of work such as building up a case against those involved.

Dolorfino said since the May 10, 2010, elections, authorities managed to dismantle six group with five members.

The group, he said, operated in Lanao del Norte.

Brig. Gen. Pantaw Guerrero, Philippine Marine Corps commander, said during a visit in Sulu on Monday that another factor hindering the campaign against private armies was that some politicians legalize them by having them as police members or members of the barangay police.

This was the main reason, Guerrero said, that the military is in a dilemma on the definition of a private army.

"We have problems on private army identification," he said, adding that it was always difficult to say who are members of private armed groups.

Chief Supt. Angelo Reyes, commander of the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations in Western Mindanao, said some elected officials can be considered patrons of armed groups.

Sanglimo said police officers are doing was to convince the patrons and their minions turn in their firearms.

But he quickly added that "it is not big challenge." Julie Alipala, *Inquirer Mindanao*

In Legazpi, cop chief fired amid crime rise

LEGAZPI CITY—Mayor Gerardine R. Rosal yesterday announced the relief of the city police chief following a spate of robberies and killings here.

Rosal also said 100 more policemen would be deployed in the city to reinforce its current 715-man police force.

Rosal said she had to relieve Senior Supt. Reinaldo Gregorio following complaints from residents and business leaders on the increasing number of crimes in the city.

Gregorio's relief takes effect as soon as a replacement arrives this week, Rosal said.

"The deployment of more policemen followed an urgent appeal by Rosal to the Philippine National Police for more men after a spate of robberies and killings.

One of the latest cases was the armed robbery on a restaurant last Sunday where a lone robber killed the driver of the restaurant and took off with P80,000 in the restaurant's earnings. Mar S. Arguelles, *Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Ilocos upland communities get windfall from ₱12-M loan

SAN FERNANDO CITY, La Union—Upland communities in at least 10 towns of the Ilocos region have increased their forest and fruit tree density using a P12-million agro-forestry livelihood assistance fund, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office here.

"Agro-forestry provides diversified income to the upland communities at the same time makes idle lands productive," said Samuel Rebadil, DENR Ilocos region director.

According to DENR data, 13 projects worth P6.5 million were given to 1,200 upland farmers in the towns of Vintar, Marcos and Sarrat in Ilocos Norte; Sharon and Del Pilar in Ilocos Sur; Tubao and Sudipen in La Union; and Sison, San Manuel and Bugallon in Pangasinan.

Out of the target 320 hectares of forest areas, 202 hectares have been planted with forest and fruit trees, resources, agricultural crops and bamboos, Rebadil said.

"We have already organized farm lots people's organizations under our community-based forest management program to ensure long-term benefits there," he said.

Rebadil said P1.6 million was also extended to farmers to finance capability building, training on agro-forestry technologies and information dissemination activities on forest protection.

These organizations have been registered with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Securities and Exchange Commission, Department of Labor and Employment and Cooperative Development Authority.

This year, five more organizations involving 221 families were granted different projects worth P4.4 million.

Among these are agro-forestry and livestock raising projects in the project in San Pedro, Bauang, Bacnotan (worth P700,917) and the Tagpan agro-forestry development in San Emilio, Bacnotan (P364,550). Gabriel Gordonio, *Inquirer Northern Luzon*

BEACH DIRT
Mbaca's contingent of forest coal gatherers are done with their task of cleaning coal that spilled into this beach in Hanagbo, Barangay, a four-wheeler-towed watercraft coal trailer into sacks to add up to the sacks of coal to be collected by the owner of the barge that spilled the dirt.

N. Samar cops slain by NPA buried as heroes

By Rachel Arnaiz
and Joey Salviosa
Inquirer Visayas

CATARMAN, Northern Samar—Two a thousand priests, including government officials, soldiers, policemen, students and relatives turned out on Thursday for the funeral of seven of eight policemen killed in an ambush by communist guerillas here on Aug. 21.

The seventh died a day later.

The eighth slain policeman, Senior Insp. Nicasio Viel Armonia, the deputy police chief of Catarman, was brought to his hometown in Iloilo, Catarman City where he was buried last Sunday.

The consecutive New People's Army (NPA) ambushes in Barangay Cabugan, Catarman, saying it was part of their unilateral offensive against government targets.

The policemen were on their way to investigate the shooting of Imelda Barangay Councilor Nelson de Vera when they were ambushed.

During Mass at Our Our Lady of Annunciation Cathedral in Catarman that preceded the funeral march, Bishop Emmanuel Trance, bishop of the Catarman diocese, expressed shock over the manner the policemen were killed.

Trance said in his homily that the killing of the policemen should motivate people to the more to work for peace.

Fernando Medina, a resident, said he attended Mass for the slain policemen out of respect for their bravery.

"They were killed helplessly," said the 58-year-old Medina.

A 21-gun salute was offered to the policemen and flags in Northern Samar were flown at half-staff.

Northern Samar Gov. Paul Daza urged President Aquino to take steps to bring justice to the slain policemen.

"This is a problem national in scope," Daza said.

The slain policemen were in their service vehicle that was engaged by two explosions before in have come from land mines as they neared their way to the village center to investigate the shooting of De Vera, a former soldier.

Villagers who saw what happened said at least 40 guerrillas ambushed the policemen and opened fire.

After the initial load of gunfire, the guerrillas approached the policemen, lying on the ground wounded, and shot them in the head at close range, according to eyewitnesses.

Shrines were showered on the policemen just as the Philippine National Police continued to endure the embarrassment and take criticism over the Aug. 23 hostage bloodbath in Manila in which a mass-discarded police-man-in hostage-taker.

ALMOST A YEAR after the wrath of Typhoon "Pepeng," some roads in the Cordilleras, like this one in Tabiog, Benguet, remain in disrepair.

Road repair in Cordillera to start a year after storm

BAGUIO CITY—Work on road damages left in the wake of last year's Typhoon "Pepeng" will start this September, just a month shy of the disaster's first anniversary in October.

A slow budget process and a recent directive requiring the Department of Public Works and Highways' prebidder conversion program to undergo bidding procedures for contracts in Benguet and Mt. Province made forced authorities to submit the work during months not heavy rains, documents from the DPWH Cordillera showed.

Reconstruction projects, funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency were originally funneled out through regional contracts by the Arroyo administration.

The delays have increased the workload of government engineers.

Aside from the Pepeng-related repairs, DPWH work crews are cleaning new landslides that blocked Cordillera roads due to recent heavy rains.

The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) said rains on Tuesday brought rocks down the Tublay section of Halsema Highway, the main road used to transport vegetables in the trading post in La Trinidad, Benguet, and to Metro Manila.

Also damaged on Tuesday were roads connecting Mt. Province and Ifugao first and Mt. Province and Kalinga, the OCD said.

On Aug. 5, mud and rocks washed down from a mountainside in Bontoc, Mt. Province, blocking vehicles from passing through a span of 80 to 120 meters of the Cervantes section of Vicente Lima Highway.

The OCD reports said repairs in that section have been hampered by intermittent rains.

Julie Apron, a government engineer of the DPWH Cordillera maintenance division, said the DPWH has made headway in opening the Cervantes section but rains triggered recurring landslides. "no traffic re-arrived only when we managed to punch through [the slides]."

Kilometers 10 and 38 of Halsema Highway suffered the biggest damage here due to heavy rains dumped by Typhoon Pepeng on October last year.

Francis Allwell, DPWH Cordillera spokesperson, said government engineers have suggested a new work cycle that takes into account erratic weather.

The DPWH's Bureau of Research and Standards had asked Cordillera engineers for inputs on the pace of work here this year as unpredictable weather has a deep impact on how roads are built in the country, Alitoon said.

To hope, the DPWH and several contractors have tapped repair crews to respond to all reports of landslides along Halsema Highway until the agency can start rehabilitation projects. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

DTI to implement 2006 EO on paperless trade deals

DAVAO CITY—After about four years since its inception, the government's paperless business registration system will finally roll out this year, a trade official said.

Wilshire Morales, program manager of the Philippine Business Registry (PBR) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), said the paperless registration system will be implemented in local and national levels.

Morales said a live test will be conducted in Caloocan City this month.

"Anybody can register a business anywhere using the power of the Internet," Morales said during Wednesday's flagtrip on PIA here.

He said the idea was to streamline the business registration process and subsequently reduce the cost of doing business, cut down red tape and promote paperless environment in the government.

PBR was conceptualized in 2006 by virtue of Executive Order No. 807 issued by then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The order mandates the DTI and other government agencies and local government units to implement the paperless business registration system.

Morales said that the PBR, being paperless, will eliminate the need for business owners to deal with trade department employees face-to-face to eliminate opportunities for graft.

It would also make it more convenient for businessmen to register their establishments without leaving their places of origin.

"As to minimum, the PBR will address the repetitive submission with multiple copies of the same documents to different agencies," said Morales.

"It will facilitate a seamless transactional environment for business registration and development across the application systems of various government agencies," he said.

Some of these agencies, he said, are the Securities and Exchange Commission, BIR, Cooperative Development Agency, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Social Security System, Pag-Ibig, Philhealth and local government units.

Morales said under the project, the online filing of applications for business registrations and licenses will only need a single device every facility, with links to systems of various government agencies and LGUs.

Citing a World Bank report, Morales said business registration in the Philippines takes 58 days and takes 11 steps. Judy Quiroz, Inquirer Mindanao

Anybody can register a business anywhere using the power of the Internet..."

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Western Visayas PNP drafts rules for coverage of crisis

By Nestor F. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—The Philippine National Police in Western Visayas is drafting guidelines on media coverage of crisis situations.

Chief Supt. Rustom Pagdilao Jr., Western Visayas police director, said in a dialogue with the station managers and media leaders on Wednesday that the guidelines have become imperative after the Aug. 23 hostage bloodbath that killed eight Hong Kong tourists and the hostage-taker, former Chief Insp. Rolando Mendoza.

Pagdilao, PNP police information officer from 2006 to 2008, had pushed for provisions on media coverage during crisis situations even before the Aug. 23 bloodbath.

He said the guidelines would govern media coverage during crisis situations to prevent media interference in police work.

Pagdilao said the regional police office hoped to enter into a memorandum of agreement with news organizations in the region to guide police policies and media coverage.

THE CONVENT for slain hostage taker and ex-cop Rolando Mendoza arrives at a church in Mandaue's hometown in Tanauan, Batangas. The Aug. 23 bloodbath that he caused became a wake-up call for police nationwide.

One of the provisions that Pagdilao recommended was to bar the airing of police positions during hostage taking cases.

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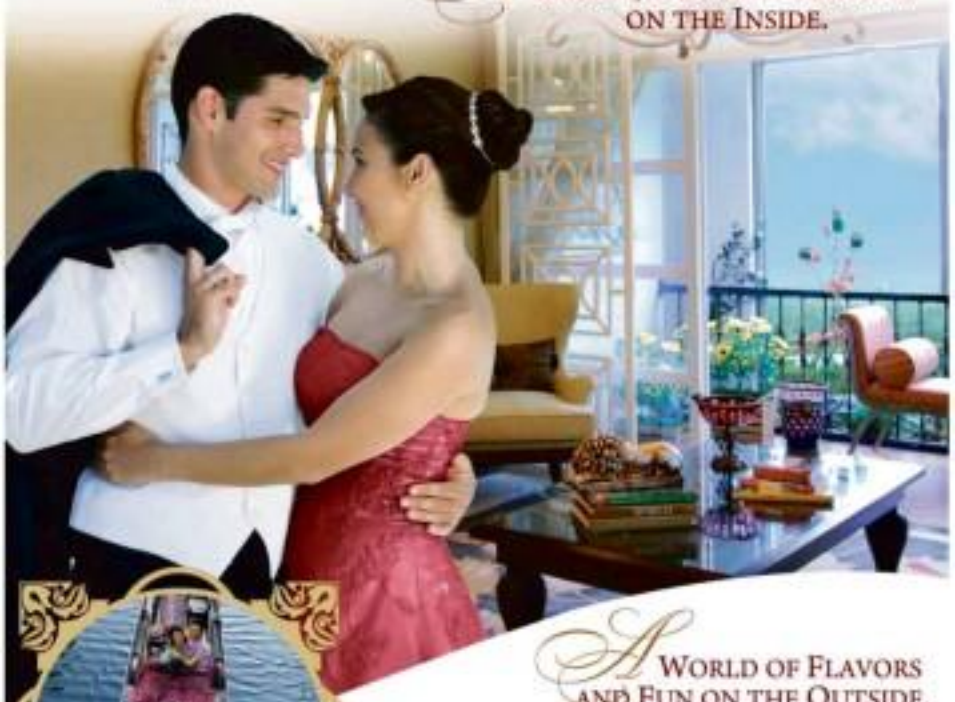

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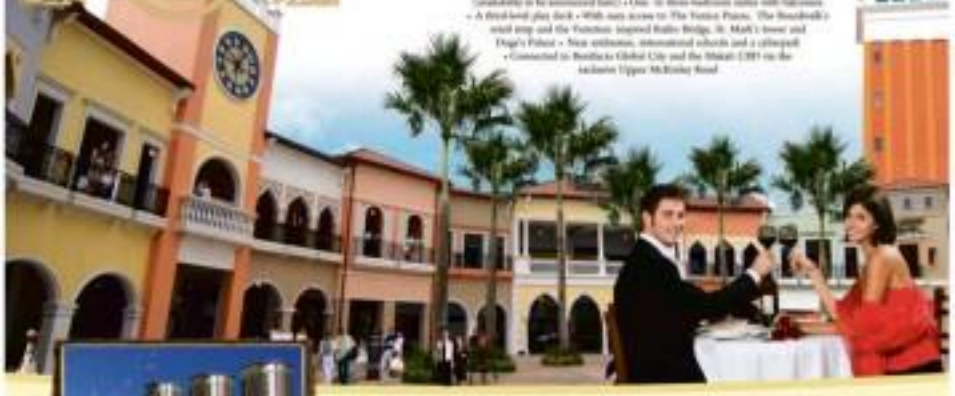

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday
Mobile blast: Text INQUIRER to 4467 | Website: www.inquirer.net/metro | E-mail: jc.joven@inquirer.com.ph
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'LINGAP SA BARANGAY' PROGRAM

MMDA starts drive vs dengue

By Tina G. Santos

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) personnel will conduct a cleanup drive today in densely populated and depressed areas in the metropolis to mitigate flooding and eliminate the breeding ground of dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino said at least 600 men would be deployed in several areas, particularly barangays in Quezon City and Manila that had been placed by health officials under close watch due to the high incidences of dengue cases.

Road clearing, sidewalk clearing and construction and equipment personnel equipped with cleaning, dredging implements and heavy machinery, will form part of the team that will be deployed in identified areas in the communities weekly from Friday to Sunday, he added.

The program, dubbed as "MMDA Lingap sa Barangay," is aimed at helping local officials and residents clean roadways, markets, drainage systems and other public places.

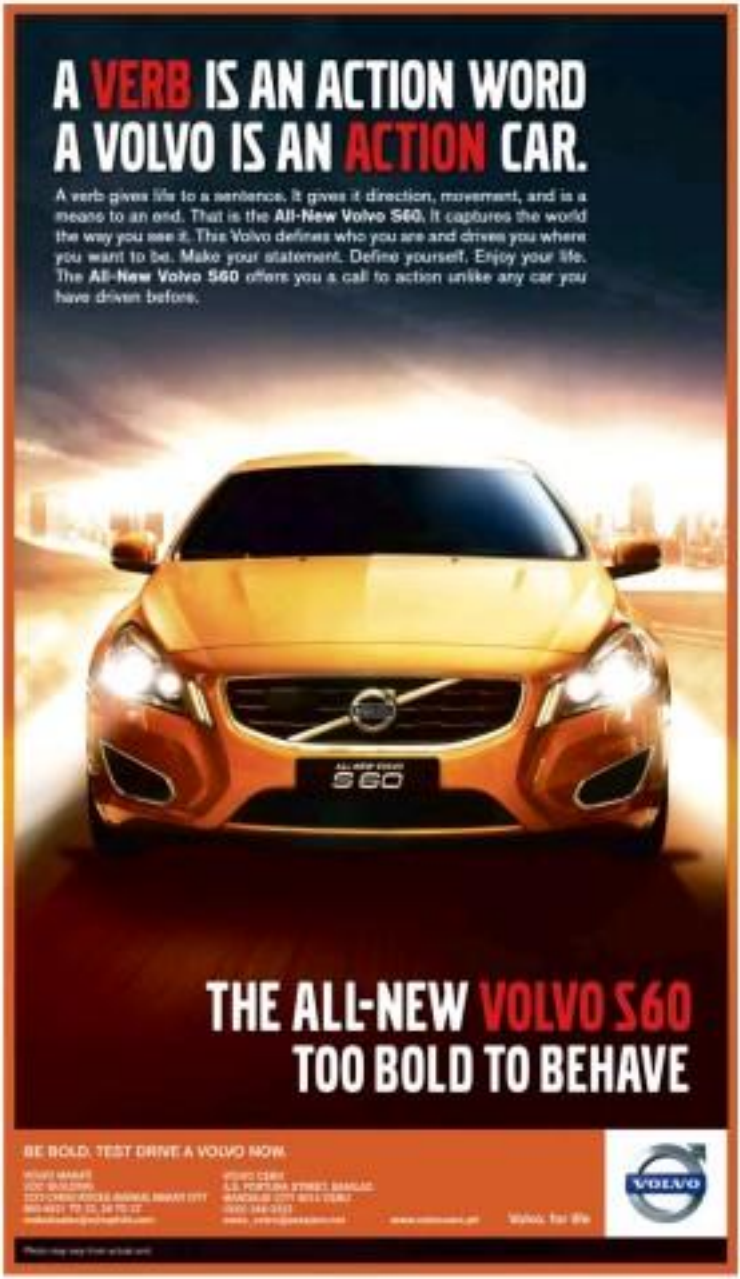
Tolentino said fogging operations would also be conducted today in several communities in Navotas and Valenzuela City that would make use of the latest chemical available, which, according to experts, could kill even adult dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

The MMDA intended to include anti-dengue cleanup operations in its outreach program after officials of the Department of Health said they had placed under close watch 15 barangays in Quezon City and 98 in Manila following a sudden increase in the number of dengue cases in these areas since the start of the year.

The cleanup drive will look still in Barangay Tatalon and Timog Seen in Quezon City where MMDA personnel armed with rakes, bolos, cutters, water cutters and heavy equipment such as backhoes, manlifters,

MMDA, A24

HOT BUSINESS AS USUAL
It's a slow day for drivers of horse-drawn carriages (kalesa) who offer rides to tourists in front of the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park, the site of the Aug. 23 hostage-taking.



4 injured in multiple vehicle mishap on SLEx

By Mike Navallo

A TRUCK loaded with sand hit a van yesterday morning on the southbound lane of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEx), starting a domino effect that involved five other vehicles and snarling traffic for several hours on the expressway.

In a statement, SLE Nopomuceno, special operations and external affairs head of SLEx operator Skyway O&M Corp. (Somco), said the seven-vehicle mishap started when an Isuzu trailer truck smashed into a Mitsubishi Adventure van near Sucat at around 5:30 a.m.

Due to the impact, the van hit a Coral passenger bus which slammed into the vehicle in front of it, creating a domino effect that involved three other vehicles which had stopped while waiting for a lane to be cleared of heavy equipment being used for ongoing construction work.

The bus, meanwhile, ripped through a steel wire screen which acts the expressway apart from the service road.

Nopomuceno said at least four persons were injured as a result of the accident. They were immediately given first aid treatments and taken to the nearest hospitals while SLEx personnel worked to clear the road as fast as they could.

The damaged cars were finally removed at a little past 7 a.m. but by that time, traffic had already slowed down to a crawl due to the closure of the area for several hours.

Vehicles were then directed to the East and West service roads.

The truck driver told authorities that his vehicle's brakes malfunctioned, leading to the accident, Nopomuceno said.

"Somco again appeals to all truck and bus operators to ensure that their vehicles are in good running condition and that their drivers are mentally and physically fit to drive as all times so as to prevent accidents that not only claim huge damage to vehicles and lose passengers but cause unnecessary traffic jams," he added.

A PASSENGER bus plows through the steel fence separating the South Luzon Expressway from the service road, one of seven vehicles which figured in an accident on the expressway.

BIG ELECTRIC POST blocks Mississippi Street in Makati City after it was knocked down by a truck that collapsed. Two cars were damaged in the incident which led to a brownout in the area.

Train ridership won't slide with fare hike—LRTA

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE NUMBER of passengers riding the Light Rail Transit (LRT) train lines is not likely to go down in the long term once the government decides to raise fares.

While some may be turned off initially, LRT Authority (LR-TA) officials said they expect passengers to take the trains again as soon as they realize how inefficient are the other forms of transport.

"Our experience in the past when a 3 percent hike in rates ship for every P1 hike in fares," LRTA Administrator Rafael Rodriguez said in an interview.

Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. the LRT Line 1, from Baclaran to Balintawak, every day LRT Line 2, stretching from Recto to Santolan, meanwhile, takes in 250,000 passengers every day.

Returning passengers

Rodriguez, who was appointed to his post less than three weeks ago, said in the late time the LRT hiked fares, there was just a slight dip in ridership.

But after six months, the commuters returned.

The government's plan to increase fares for Metro Manila's train lines is part of efforts to cut out spending and keep an already-bloated budget deficit in check.

Rodriguez said the LRTA stands to gain between P700 million and P1 billion from a hike in basic fares at both Lines 1 and 2.

The minimum fare is currently at P15 for both lines.

Data from the LRTA showed that the government subsidizes an average of P25.46 for every passenger on Line 1 and P30.66 per passenger on Line 2.

The subsidies are meant to keep fares low for the benefit of passengers.

The government wants to bring this up to as much as P40, roughly the same price of a bus ticket.

Government subsidy

Last year, the government spent Ph5.4 billion in subsidies LRT operations.

The government also spends over P5 billion a year to subsidize the operations of the Metro Rail Transit, the main system along Edsa that stretches from Taft Avenue in Pasay City to North Avenue in Quezon City.

Falling concrete gutter hits post, causes power outage

By Tina G. Santos

EDSA area in Makati City had to electricity yesterday after the concrete gutter of a tree collapsed.

PCO Nick Bondi of the Makati Police said the gutter of the house on Washington Street, Barangay Pio del Pilar fell at around 2 a.m. The house is reportedly owned by Ramon Cuty.

The ignited collapsed and fenced on electric cables, causing the electric post to fall. This resulted in a power outage in the area and nearby businesses," Jacal told reporters.

Residents in the area told police that they were awakened by a loud thud. Others said they thought there was an earthquake because they felt tremors.

Two vehicles, a Toyota Corolla XE and an Toyota Innova, were damaged after the electric post fell on them.

No one was reported injured in the accident.

Taguig officials on warpath; it's vice mayor vs mayor

By Mike Navallo

MAYOR Vice Mayor George Elma and several city councilors have filed criminal and administrative complaints against Mayor Ma. Laarni Cayetano and city administrator Jose Luis Montales with the Ombudsman and Office of the President, respectively.

In their complaints which were filed on Wednesday, Elma and the councilors accused Cayetano and Montales of grave misconduct, oppression and abuse of authority for ordering the session hall padlocked on Aug. 16, forcing members of the city council to hold bi-weekly sessions in the corridor of city hall.

'Illegal act'

"The sudden and ill-timed padlocking of the session hall is both a patent illegal act and a blatant abuse of authority since there is no approved plan and budget nor is there a pertinent need for the purported renovation or repair of the city hall or even the session hall alone," the complainants said.

The complainants cite as witnesses all members of the city council, Montales informed them that the session hall would be closed for repairs while the session rooms would be reorganized.

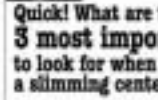
"Apart from being a disgraceful affront to the standing and dignity of the Sangguniang as an independent body, [their actions in] a naked act of oppression designed to harass and humiliate complainants individually," Elma and company said.

In the complaint filed with the Ombudsman, members of the Taguig City Council asked that Cayetano and Montales be charged with preventing them from convening, which, according to them was in violation of the Revised Penal Code.

They also asked the Office of the President to suspend the two officials for 60 days while an investigation of the charges against them was ongoing.

As for Montales, the Commission on Elections spokesperson, Director Jesse Rey declined to comment.

"Actually, we haven't seen the complaint and we have yet to be furnished with a hard copy of their complaint. We just heard it through the grapevine," Rey said.



Quick! What are the 3 most important things to look for when choosing a slimming center? (Answer below)

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MMDA starts drive vs dengue

From page A23

dump trucks, fogging and boom trucks would dredge and desilt canals, esteros and drainage inlets, repair dilapidated and protruded house facades, and burn up dangling wires and cables on the streets.

Simultaneous with the cleanup activities, the public safety office of the MMDA will also conduct a massive campaign against breeding sites and their awareness of contingency measures to be taken during emergencies.

"With villages established and fitted up, and together with the local governments units and private sector concerned, this community outreach program is a timely and relevant project done not only to save our people faced with various challenges and serious difficulties," Tolentino said.

He added that the cleanup campaign is a component of the MMDA's community outreach program and is in line with its broader mandate to implement programs on solid waste disposal, flood control and sewerage management, urban renewal and health and sanitation.

All of these are geared towards the enhancement of ecological balance in various communities within Metro Manila in coordination with LGUs, he said.

METROBRIEFS

Additional benefit for elderly proposed

A BALIUAG City councilor has pushed for elderly car owners and drivers to be exempt from paying parking fees in business establishments like malls and hospitals, in a proposed ordinance. Councilor Ali Jan Benedict Dizon said the move would help the "aging population to maximize its contribution to nation building." However, he said a bar that its proposal would not apply to overnight parking. To avail themselves of the exemption, elderly drivers must present a valid senior citizen's identification card issued by the city government's Senior Citizens Affairs Department. The elderly should be the driver or a passenger of the vehicle. Under the proposed measure, violators will face imprisonment of a day to 30 days or a fine of P500 or both.

John M. Aquino

Former inmate killed

ROMBLON investigators are looking at the angle of personal vendetta as motivate identity in the murder for the killing on Wednesday night of a former Manila City jail inmate in Alfonso. SPO2 Eugenio Ko of the Alfonso Police District homicide section said that Jimi Arca, 27, of Area 4 Sale 20 in Florida Compound, Tondo, died instantly from a gunshot wound on the head after he was shot by an unidentified gunman by a still unidentified gunman.

Jeannette I. Andrade

DID YOU KNOW

EDITOR'S NOTE: In secondhand smoke caused more than 20 deaths and the number of fatal attacks in Metro Manila in 2009, according to the 2009 Philippines Global Adult Tobacco Survey. The latest survey found that some 3.5 million Filipinos aged 15 and above nationwide either used cigarettes from their homes and were thus exposed to secondhand cigarette smoke.

Alan P. Feliciano Jaquino Research

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INQUIRER

Netanyahu, Abbas vow to reach peace in Mideast

WASHINGTON—The Israeli and Palestinian leaders were to open direct peace negotiations on Thursday after committing to work to end the conflict that has endured for six decades.

The talks are to be held at the State Department under the eye of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. The negotiations are to follow a remarkable tableau at the White House on Wednesday night, where President Barack Obama, flanked by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority, vowed to do everything within his power in the next year to achieve the comprehensive agreement that has eluded negotiators since Israel was established.

In another, emotional tones, Netanyahu and Abbas expressed their own determination to make peace.

Netanyahu, turning toward Abbas, called him his "partner in peace." He said he came to find a "historic compromise" but warned that any deal must be anchored in ensuring Israel's security.

Abbas, for his part, said he would push hard despite "the difficulties we're going to face tomorrow" but he quickly foreshadowed the biggest sticking point in the talks, calling for Netanyahu to freeze settlement activity in the West Bank.

While the issues are daunting, some analysts saw a seed of hope in the resolute response of Netanyahu and Abbas to the killing by Hamas gunmen of four Israeli settlers in the West Bank on the eve of the talks. Both men immediately said the attack should not be allowed to derail the negotiations, and the Palestinian Authority condemned the killings.

"Normally it's been relatively easy to torpedo, or veto, any progress between Israelis and Palestinians," said Ehud J. Asali, the president of the American Task Force on Palestine. "This means an incredible loss of a weapon."

On Thursday, a Hamas spokesperson said the group was responsible for another attack in which two settlers were shot and wounded just as Obama began his White House statement.

The four Roses gathering was a rare moment of diplomatic theater, enjoyed by the attendance of President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and King Abdullah II of Jordan, and orchestrated by Obama as part of an effort to invest the process with its own personal stamp. It came after Obama held a series of one-on-one meetings with the men throughout the day and just before they were to begin a working dinner. On Thursday, Netanyahu and Abbas are to begin direct talks.

For Netanyahu and Abbas, the talks with Obama very much echo their respective histories. Abbas, who is 75, is taking a huge risk: President Bill Clinton's failed attempt in 2000 led to the Palestinian intifada, and President George W. Bush's Annapolis peace attempt dissolved amid chronic violence in Gaza.

Too much blood has already been shed, too many hearts have already been broken," Obama said. "This moment of opportunity may not return once again."

The inclusion of Mubarak and Abdullah underlines the administration's hopes to forge a regional solution to the conflict. Egypt and Jordan are critical to providing Israel with security guarantees that would enable it to accept the creation of a Palestinian state.

Mubarak has offered to host subsequent rounds of talks in Egypt, although officials said he was pushing for Obama to take a direct personal role in the process. *New York Times*

US PRESIDENT Barack Obama (right) in a huddle with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel (center) and President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority on Sept. 1 at the White House. AFP

Number of illegal immigrants entering US plunges

WASHINGTON—The flow of illegal immigrants from Latin America into the United States has plunged, falling from an annual 800,000 per year early in the last decade to around 300,000 by last year, according to a report released on Wednesday.

The nearly two-thirds decline in numbers of illegals entering the United States has brought with it the first significant drop in the population of undocumented US residents in two decades—down from a peak of 12 million in 2007 to 11.1 million in 2009, the report by the Pew Hispanic Center said.

But the population of illegals in the United States has near was still a third greater last year than in 2000, when 8.4 million undocumented aliens lived in the United States, and those figures loggerthan in 1990, the report said.

The biggest decline in unauthorized immigrants in the United States was among citizens of Latin American countries other than Mexico. From 2007–2009, the number of citizens from the Caribbean, Central and South America living illegally in the United States fell by nearly a quarter.

Mexicans are easily the biggest group of unauthorized migrants, making up around 60 percent of all illegal immigrants living in the United States.

However, their numbers peaked in 2007 at seven million, and since then have leveled off, the report found.

Meanwhile, the influx of new undocumented Mexican migrants has slowed significantly in recent years, the report found.

According to the Pew Hispanic Center's estimates, some 150,000 undocumented migrants from Mexico arrived in the United States each year between 2007 and 2009, compared with an annual average of 800,000 between 2000 and 2005.

There was no change in the number of illegal migrants to the United States from the rest of the world.

The report does not try to explain why the numbers of illegals entering or residing in the United States has fallen, although it notes that the US economy entered a recession in 2007 and that border security has been stepped up. AFP

Australian school drops 'gay' from classic song

SYDNEY—An Australian school principal has asked students to stop using the word "gay" when singing a classic children's song, but said no Thursday no offense was intended—he was simply trying to keep the kids from laughing.

Principal Garry Manton of La Trobe Primary School in Melbourne said he instructed students to substitute the line "Pass your life more fun" for the original "Gay your life more fun" when singing "Rockabye-by Bye in the Old Cane Tree". The song about a native Australian tree is a favorite around campfires from New Zealand to Canada.

Manton said he was playing a recording of the song for the students about a month ago when the line "gay your life more fun" produced a flurry of giggles that neighbors and classmates. Some of the students say the word "gay" in a schoolyard taunt, he said, but don't understand its true meaning. And so, to calm them down, he told them to swap in the word "fun" for "gay."

"It wasn't misplaced political correctness, it wasn't homophobia, there was nothing really calculated in doing it," he told The Associated Press. "I could've stopped the whole class and gone into a very caring, supportive explanation of gay being quite a common, able choice in lifestyle that some people make, but it was really talking with 7- and 8-year-olds and I don't think that sort of thing is better explained room fully with parents."

His decision erupted into a controversy, he said, after one of the students told his parents about Manton's change to the song. Word then spread from the parents to friends to the local newspaper, which ran a story—and Manton himself being bombarded with angry e-mails.

"Some think I'm the devil incarnate," he said.

Cressida Wilkie, CEO of the gay and lesbian advocacy group The Alex Dreamstones, didn't go that far—but he did call the lyrical swap an unnecessary one.

"It seems to us to be people that just because a word has two meanings, that one of those meanings is unacceptable and that's really pushing an fundamentalist," Wilkie said. "Even if it's done for good intentions because 'gay' is being used to schoolyards as a slur, I think they need to use the word as a conversation rather than banning it." AP

Massacre of migrants leaves trail of tears in Latin America

By Randal C. Archibold

AGUA CALIENTE, Guatemala—He was worried the journey south would be hard, so Gilmar Mejía Sánchez packed up an eggs and sausage, bought some bare sandwiches from the hookups across the street, told his mother he loved her and set off with two other relatives on a path well traveled by young people here in one of Latin America's poorest countries.

Then, a few weeks later, his mother, crouching a TV news show, looked hard at a picture of the bodies of 72 Central and South American migrants killed last week in northeast Mexico near the Texas border. Was that Gilmar, the one with the familiar yellow-and-white striped T-shirt, his black jacket?

"They told us they are sending his body this week," Matilde Sánchez said beside the small cinder-block family home here, next to an altar of flowers and candles in honor of Matilde, 22, and his companions headed north, later murdered to be victims of the massacre.

Despite all the hardships and perils that stand between here—a ragged drug war in Mexico, walls, border patrols, National Guard troops, anti-immigrant furor and a fragile economy—if they even make it—they still come.

And they will die, often in the deserts of the Southwest, sometimes at the hands of thieves and kidnappers and smugglers, or crashing, tired, up-country at the hands of a drug gang seeking money or possibly recruits, officials said, although nobody knows for sure. Mexican officials confirmed Wednesday that they were questioning a second survivor, a Honduran man, beyond the Guatemans who first showed them to the killing ranch.

The toll in this massacre was staggering: 31 Hondurans, 12 Salvadorans, a Brazilian, five Guatemalans. Those are just the ones who have been identified. Authorities in Mexico are taking DNA samples, photographs and other steps to make final confirmations of these victims and identify the others killed, but, if the history of migrants found dead in Arizona are a guide, it could take months or years to know who the victims were. Indeed, the authorities may never know.

The rush to minimize in the countries where it is believed the migrants originated suggests that many more than these 72 have met unnatural fates in just 48 people have called Guatemala's foreign Ministry, looking for information on loved ones. Many showed up to El Salvador doing the same, and a similar mood gathered in Honduras, where the relatives of one man confirmed dead burned at a government office upon hearing the news.

Both the United States and Mexico say migration is down, because of the economy and the toughening security at the border. But the true flow is impossible to determine, and it continues to be strong enough that Guatemala recently opened a new consulate near the Mexican border, in conjunction with El Salvador, and plans to open two more, including one in the area where the migrants were killed.

A Guatemalan government report said that last year 27,252 of its citizens were deported from the United States and 20,000 from Mexico. Hondurans estimate more than 500 of its people leave for the north every day.

"We are deeply concerned about the constant reports of human rights violations of migrants in Mexico's territory," Haroldo Rodas, Guatemala's foreign minister, said this week.

Mexico's National Commission for Human Rights said in a report last year that 9,758 migrants were abducted from September 2008 to February 2009. The Mexican government, in light of the massacre, has promised a new strategy to protect migrants, including better coordination among states and federal agencies to dismantle kidnapping gangs and disrupt their finances.

It seems certain that the lure of the north will be hard to overcome in the impoverished small towns and villages from which many of the men and women, typically in their late teens or 20s, see little hope and roll the dice.

"People here, given Guatemala City or the United States," said Carlos Humberto Paz, the mayor of the municipality that includes Agua Caliente.

Morales' father, who asked that his name not be used because he fears reprisals from his son's killers, himself journeyed north in the 1980s for several months but eventually returned homeless and frustrated with the sporadic work in the United States.

He told his son of the long trek, a gantlet of drowns, kidnappers, rapists, crooked police officers and border guards, but those of his son were lost and work in the United States and it seemed inevitable that Morales would go.

He had left months two months ago—his 14-year-old bride, still in shock, barely able to speak—and promised to make life better for his family here. Barely nineteen had been rejected for a visa, his father said, so he decided to go undocumented.

"He didn't care what could happen," his father said. *New York Times News Service*

THE BODIES of some of the 72 migrants killed in a ranch in Mexico lie at an abandoned warehouse in San Fernando, Tamaulipas state, Mexico, on Aug. 23. AP

Gillard wins key backing in bid to regain power

SYDNEY—Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard won the support of a key independent MP on Thursday, boosting her chase to breaking the worst political deadlock in decades after elections failed to produce a winner.

Former Iraq war whistle-blower Andrew Wilkie said Gillard's center-left Labor party was more likely to deliver "stable" and "competent" government, as conservative rival Tony Abbott's campaign was more of a parliamentary majority.

"I have judged that it is the Australian Labor Party that best meets my criteria that the next government must be stable, must be competent and must be ethical," Wilkie told journalists in Canberra.

Wilkie's vote gives Gillard 74 seats in the 150-member lower house, just shy of an absolute majority of 76. But Tony Abbott's opposition coalition remains locked in the lead with 73 seats and three independents still undecided.

Tasmania's Wilkie urged the three remaining "kingmakers" to make their move soon, following nearly two weeks of political paralysis after August 21 polls returned the first hung parliament since 1940.

"I hope that my decision is a signal to the other three independents and they move as soon as they can to make their decisions," he said.

Rural MPs Tony Windsor and Bob Oakeshott, and cowboy hat-wearing maverick Bob Katter, have pledged to begin formal negotiations on Friday.

But commentary is now firmly behind Gillard, Australia's first woman prime minister, after she confirmed the support of parliament's lone Greens MP on Wednesday.

She said Wilkie's decision was cemented by a $10 million dollar (9.9 million US) pledge for a hospital in his electorate, and announces the government would try to ease gambling problems caused by unregistered "pokie" slot machines.

"I thank Mr Wilkie for leaning in mind at all stages the national interest," she said. "He has clearly been motivated to enter this agreement based on his view of the national interest." Gillard also convened a house on Thursday where the opposition was accused of a policy blow-out of up to 10 billion US dollars, prompting the "kingmakers" to question Abbott's treasurer Hockey.

Wilkie also said an official Treasury study had revealed a major discrepancy in the opposition's spending plans, and said the figures raised questions about whether Abbott had been honest with voters about the cost of his policies.

Australian politics has been on a rollercoaster ride since June, when Gillard stepped in to oust party rival against elevated prime minister Kevin Rudd to become the country's first female leader.

Friday scrambles and poor campaigning by Gillard ended in the closest election in decades, with disillusioned voters failing to decisively back either major party. AFP

GILLARD announcing the support of Wilkie in Canberra on Sept. 2. AP

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gozo

US formally begins a new era in Iraq

BAGHDAD—The United States began a fragile new era in its turbulent history with Iraq on Wednesday as US political and military leaders marked the official end of combat operations but acknowledged that a difficult milestone, the creation of a new coalition Iraqi government, was not yet in reach.

At the marble rotunda of Al Faw Palace, one of the lavish Roman palaces of Saddam Hussein that serves as the US military headquarters in Baghdad, New Pentagon Joe Biden, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Gen. Ray Odierno sounded the same themes in a made-for-television ceremony to inaugurate Operation New Dawn, as the post-combat phase has been named. The US military, they said, was moving toward an exit after seven years of war, but the Obama administration would not abandon the country.

"We stood together in difficult times, we fought together, we laughed together and sometimes cried together," Odierno, who formally ended more than four years of service in Iraq, including two as the top US commander, said during the ceremony. He said the change in mission, which will leave about 50,000 US troops in the country, "is in very signals the end of our commitment to the people of Iraq."

He ended his remarks with his military sign-off: "Live it—Ono."

The ceremony, attended by hundreds of US and Iraqi military commanders under US and Iraqi flags hung between the romantic black marble columns, at times resembled a high school reunion as officers who served multiple deployments to Iraq greeted one another before the formalities began.

The setting was rich in symbolism: some seven years and five months ago, US forces entered the decrepit palace during the invasion of Baghdad to find an enormous cluster bomb on American bomb, air plumbing or electricity, and paint wandering the rooms.

Despite the pageantry of the ceremony held the day after President Barack Obama declared combat operations at an end in a prime-time address from the Oval Office, military officials have been concerned that a prolonged political stalemate could lead to a resumption of the bloodshed in Iraq, which has been sharply reduced from the dark days before a 2007 increase in US forces but is still not under control.

Soccer anxieties gathered for the US military alone that in the last 17 days of the month, the bloodier body month that began in August, there was a substantial increase in casualties when compared with a similar period during Ramadan in 2009.

There has also been a major increase in rocket and mortar attacks in the fortified Green Zone and at the Baghdad airport, according to brig. Gen. Hajib A. Bilal, the deputy commander of US forces in central Iraq. Bilal, who said there had been about 60 such attacks in the past two months compared with "zero or three" in the preceding months, blamed a "confluence" of factors, including frustration over electricity shortages, the return of battery-related militias and Iraq's failure to produce a government recently take months after elections, which the insurgents have sought to exploit.

The goal of the insurgents, he said, is to "further erode confidence" in the Iraqi government and Iraqi forces "by trying to portray them as weak."

But in an interview, Biden played down the risk of a fresh round of violence, saying that the Iraqi military was holding its own, and that it had taken the insurgents of al-Qaida in Mesopotamia several months to organize a recent string of attacks.

"The reason why I think there is an uptick in the violence—and I seem to attract attention when I say in the Green Zone—is because this is a time when they have to try to make a statement," the vice president said, referring to the insurgents. "But the difference is that there is actually a military that is able to function and provide security, notwithstanding the government hasn't been formed yet."

Biden also sought to cast the statement in a positive light.

"Politics has broken out in Iraq," he said in his remarks from the podium. But he added that the Iraqis had overwhelmingly voted in large numbers, and therefore "they expect a government that reflects the results of the votes they cast."

Gates, who has taken a markedly anti-triumphal tone during the debate surrounding the end of combat, said earlier Wednesday that history had still to judge whether America's involvement in the war was worth the cost.

Gates said that while US service members "have accomplished something really quite extraordinary here, how it all weighs in the balance over time I think remains to be seen."

Asked directly if the war had been worth it, Gates replied, "It really requires historian's perspective in terms of what happens here in the long run."

The war, he added, "will always be dreadfully how it began"—that is, he said, on the premise that Hussein had nonconventional weapons, which did not exist. "This is one of the reasons that this war remains so controversial at home," he said. AP/NN

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Big advance in TB diagnosis

MELBOURNE—Scientists are reporting a major advance in diagnosing tuberculosis. A new test can reveal in less than two hours, with very high accuracy, whether someone has the disease and if it's resistant to the main drug for treating it.

The test could revolutionize TB care and replace the 125-year-old process used now, which is slow and misses more than half of all cases, experts say. A better test would be a powerful tool to curb TB in poor countries, where many people spread the lung disease before they are diagnosed and treated, and many don't return for follow-up doctor visits to get test results.

In the United States, it would be a big help in inner city clinics, where diagnosing a drug-resistant strain on someone's first visit enables proper treatment right away.

"You can tell the patient before they leave the office if they have TB and if it's drug-resistant. It's unprecedented," said Dr. Dave Small, head of TB programs at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which helped fund the work, along with the US government.

The World Health Organization will meet with experts over the next few days to review results and plan steps forward, says a statement from one of its TB experts, Dr. Mario Raviglione.

"These results suggest that it has the potential to revolutionize TB care, and WHO will treat it as a top priority," the statement says. AP

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Final 4 cast complete as Tams, Archers win

By Jasmine N. Payo

LE SALLE got the job done after Far Eastern University gave the Archers a lift as the UAAP Final Four cast in the men's basketball tournament was finalized yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Struggling for most of the second half, Joshua Webb played his best game as the former Archers eliminated the University of Santo Tomas, 78-69, and sealed La Salle's Final Four tenure after missing the semifinals for the first time last year.

"A lot of people are saying that we're a young team, but we proved them wrong," said La Salle coach Derick Pumaren.

La Salle also drew help from the Tamaraws, who earlier ousted out the Final Four hopes of the fifth-running National U Bulldogs with a 77-61 rout in the first game.

The Tamaraws picked up their 13th victory in 12 games to keep the solo lead and insure within a win of claiming the first semifinal berth.

La Salle joined ville Adamson as third at 9-4, just a game behind defending champion Ateneo (9-3).

All four semifinalists still have a shot at the twice-to-beat advantage, the incentive given to the top two teams at the end of the eliminations.

"The whole year we had the tendency on our back for not making it to the Final Four last season," said Webb, who netted 14 points.

"We're happy that we made it but we can't stop here. We have a chance to get the No. 2 seat, so we're going to work on that."

The Bulldogs, who dropped to 5-7, ended their Final Four bid along with the Tigers, who fell to 4-8.

RR Garcia helped the Tamaraws defeat the Bulldogs' third-quarter stumble, before finishing with a game high 23 points.

The Tamaraws surged ahead by 16 in the first half, 38-14, but the Bulldogs came back in the third with a 13-2 rampage to grab the lead, 41-41.

"They (Bulldogs) had three fouls in the first half and no fouls in the third quarter, I think that's the story there," said UST coach Glen Capacio, who again complained of sporty officiating. "They closed in because there were no fouls."

The Bulldogs' registered the least number of fouls in a single game in the last eight seasons with just seven.

Webb's robust performances dipped this season and averaged 5.7 points a game, nailed all but one of his six attempts from the field to share scoring honors with Simon Atkins, who also had 14 points.

"I told the boys to execute better in the first quarter we were so tentative and committed eight turnovers right away," said Pumaren.

Responding quickly, the Archers had the game in control by the second quarter, 26-24, and repelled UST's comeback attempts in the second half behind Webb and Atkins.

Mike Williamson had a double-double of 11 points and 10 rebounds to help the Archers go up by as many as 16 points, 66-50, in the third period.

Garcia, this season's top MVP candidate, drilled three of his five triples in the last five minutes of the third quarter that got the Tamaraws back on top, 59-55.

Aldrech Ramos and Cameron Torres-Gregorio also tallied double figures for the Tamaraws with 14 points apiece.

"La Salle used the same defense against us and we couldn't execute as well as we did the same," said Capacio.

In junior action, Kevin Ferrer had 17 points and 17 rebounds as the Tiger Cubs downed the Admiration Baby Falcons, 65-50, to forge a knockout tie for the last semifinal berth.

The Tiger Cubs and the Bulldogs, tied at second at 10-4, will dispute the No. 2 spot and the twice-to-beat bonus in the stepladder semifinals.

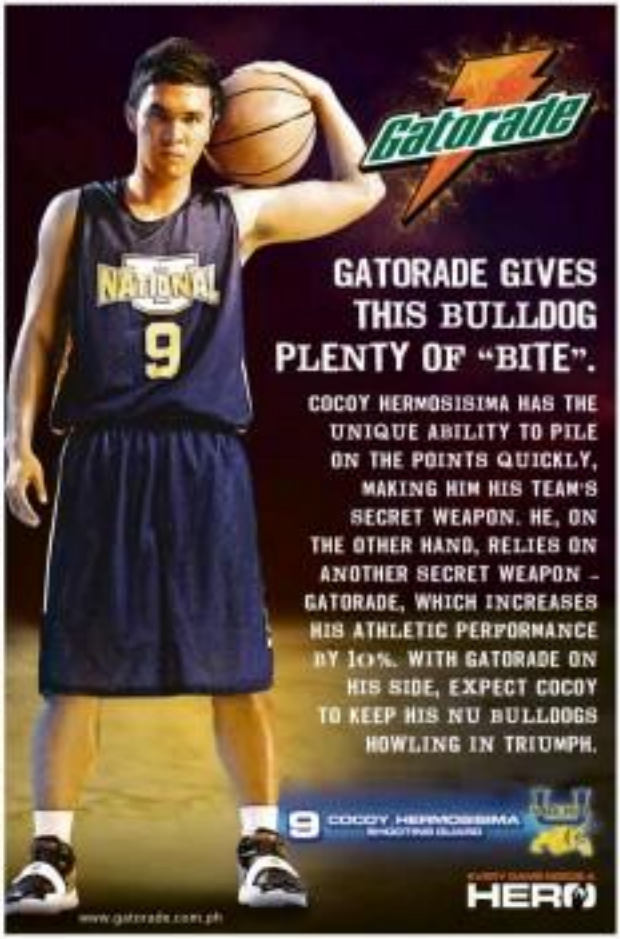
Defending champion Ateneo claimed an outright fourth berth after sweeping the 14-game eliminations.

The Baby Tamaraws and the La Salle Zobel Junior Archers, tied at 7-7, will also fight for the last semifinal berth at 12:30 a.m. on Sunday after the 8:30 UST-NU clash at the FEGLI Pilipinas Arena.

In the stepladder semifinals, the No. 3 and No. 4 teams will clash in a knockout game for the right to meet the No. 2 squad.

LA SALLE'S Joseph Tolentino (right) tries to steal off UST's Jerie Tang

UST's Chris Cornes (left) sharpens mocks Salle's Simon Atkins in yesterday's game



Cardinals try to put lock on No. 4 vs Generals

By Cedelf P Tupas

MANILA TIED 1-1 apiece in a game on the finals and last semifinal spot when it battles Manila Adventist College today in the 68th NCAA basketball tournament at the FIBER Flying V Arena in San Juan.

Just a game and a half behind third-running Jose Rizal U at 6-4, the Cardinals are actually shooting for a repeat of their first-round win over the slumping Generals in the 6 p.m. duel.

Magnus will go into the game seeing with confidence after a come-from-behind 63-60 triumph over Letran, its a game where it rallied from 14 points down in the last three and a half minutes.

Ace Ilunes, canning two bill games behind Magno in 58% spot, hopes to boost its chances of entering the Final Four when it tackles St. Benilde at 2 p.m.

The Chiefs are aiming to revenge their 64-79 defeat to the Blazers in the first round.

Like Magno, St. Benilde is also coming off a confidence-boosting victory. The Blazers crushed the Generals, 82-60, for only their third win in 10 games last Monday.

St. Benilde coach Richard del Rosario stressed the importance of consistency as they try to salvage the Blazers' sputtering campaign.

"We have to be consistent throughout our remaining games," Del Rosario said.

Carlo Lastimosa has been the only consistent performer for the Blazers. But relying too much on the Cagayan de Oro native had, on several times, led to St. Benilde's downfall.

The Chiefs are looking to bounce back from a 58-72 loss to the on-again, off-again Knights last Monday.

Except for Justin Chua, who finished with 9 rebounds, the Chiefs grasped for lions.

The Cardinals scored 17 points in the last 9:36 to subdue the Knights and coach Chito Victolero hopes his team will continue their explosive form against the Generals, who have yet to win a game in the second round.

"We need to play aggressive from start to finish," said Victolero.

Laylo gains tie for 2nd place

Bests Kazakh GM in 7th round

GM Eugene Torre is in action against GM Marat Kazhgaleyev

By Roy Luarca

GRANDMASTER Darwin Laylo exacted revenge over GM Marat Kazhgaleyev of Kazakhstan Wednesday night to carry the fight for the Philippines in the First Phase presidents' Phoenix Conquerors Memorial Cup chess championships at the Rizal Memorial Stadium.

The 2010 Chess Olympiad found Laylo released from a losing game he played against Kazhgaleyev during the recent sixth Prospero Pichay Cup and emerged victorious with black after 53 moves of the Grunfeld.

It was a fitting follow-up to Laylo's conquest of Indian GM Chanda Sandipan in the sixth round, giving the 20-year-old pride of Lapu-Lapu 5.5 points, just half a point behind solo leader GM Zhao Jun of China.

"It's very happy with the victory," said Laylo. "He beat me in the Pichay Cup because I went for a win despite handling black."

It was a good day for the Philippines as GM Eugene Torre scored Cyprus GM Si Yiu in 31 moves of the Larsen, while National Master Rustamid Sevador shocked Armenian GM Tigran Kocaojan to join Laylo and GM Wesley So at top contenders for the $15,000 top prize.

Finishing brilliant form, the 56-year-old Torre exploited NM weak pawn structure in the endgame to clinch his first win over the fourth-seeded Chinese player (2626).

Second-seed So split the point with Zhao.

Sharing second to fourth place with Laylo were top seed GM Le Quang Liem of Vietnam, who downed Iranian GM Ehsan Ghaemmaghami, and third seed GM Zhao Jianchao of China, who bested Singaporean GM Zhang Zhong.

The 16-year-old So and Yorn, who will join Laylo in the IIF team to the Chess Olympiad from Sept. 13-Oct. 3, stood at 5.0 points with GMs Javlon Pilgaev of Uzbekistan, Ling Chen of China and Mesdi Gagunashvili of Georgia.

Laylo was set to do battle with Zhou in the eighth round late Thursday with So and Yorn battling Ding and Pilgaev, respectively.

Pilgaev, the Pichay Cup champion, recovered from an inferior position to subdue Filipino GM Jayson Gonzales.

Filipino IMs Reinaldo Solis and Oliver Dee boss stayed in the running for a top 10 finish for salvaging Rachel Gopopil and IM Barlo Nadera, respectively, and climbing to 4.5 points.

Margarito size no big deal—Roach

ROACH: By KO

FOR BALLYHOABIE Freddie Roach, the skin advantage of Brandon Antonio Margarito over his own, ground-for-ground king Manny Pacquiao, has fly tourneys.

The four-time Trainer of the Year still believes Pacquiao will knock out Margarito, who enjoys at least a 4-inch height and 6-inch reach advantage, what they say people for the vacant World Boxing Council super welterweight crown on Nov. 13 at the Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

"You doesn't win fights, It I will show," Roach told BoxingDespatch.com Wednesday during a gathering at the Chelsea Piers in Manhattan York where the two fighters held the second stop of their three-city promotional tour.

"I'm predicting a knockout."

While he regards Margarito as a strong fighter, Roach insists he's "not a big puncher."

Meanwhile, Top Rank promoter Bob Arum had to abruptly leave the Pacquiao-Margarito kickoff press conference in Los Angeles after he learned that his 69-year-old lawyer ex was running during a biking trip in the mountains in Seattle, Washington.

Arum, grabbed the first available flight out of Los Angeles with his wife Lovee after his ex-wife reported missing on Sunday. They had just returned from Europe.

Michael Marks reported on kindergarten exist that John Arum was "a highly skilled environmental attorney and is committed to working for water reforms in Washington and to helping create a state where both people and nature full populations can coexist." Ray Lustre and Rowdy McPhaidin

RP Youth dribblers face tough bracket

By Jess Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Youth team faces an uphill battle in the Fiba Asia Under-18 Championship set next month in Sanya, Yemen.

Coach Eric Altamirano's squad landed in the same Group C bracket with powerhouse China, Syria and Saudi Arabia, which the 87 youth dribblers have never played before.

"China will definitely be tough, while we don't have any scouting reports on Syria and Saudi Arabia," said Altamirano, whose team qualified for the continental meet after sweeping the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) Championship in Myanmar in July.

China has won the biennial tournament an unprecedented eight times, while the Philippines ruled the meet on times, including the Tres-Ace singings.

The top three finishers in the Fiba Asia tournament, slated Sept. 22 to Oct. 1, will represent the continent in the Fiba World Under-19 Championship next year in Latvia.

Altamirano also raised concerns over the availability of players since only eight have been practicing for the tourney.

He said key players Ricthi Sherma, Ben Mbonnel and Kevin Ferrer are playing for their respective schools in the ongoing UAAP season.

"They might not play but we have a pool of 11 players ready to replace them just in case they're not available," said Altamirano.

He added that Phi Ben Guy Perks, son of seven-time PBA Best Import Bobby Parks, who played for the RP Y-at-3 team in the recent Youth Olympic Games in Singapore, will play for the team.

The Filipinos will try to surpass the seventh-place finish of the squad coached by Yeng Guiterrez in 2008 in Tehran. The last time the Philippines made the tournament was in 1982, when it finished the event.

Defending champion Iran leads Group A, which also includes Bahrain, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei and Malaysia, while 2008 second-placer Kazakhstan heads Group B with Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Qatar.

Host Yemen is bracketed with Japan, Iraq and India in Group D.

SPORTSWATCH

Memory athletes in Scoop

PHOTOS BC Manning Alaska party-list Rep. Mark Cavitan and UC Open Interactive Corp. Memory Champion Johann Romulo Pacio-ag Alcina will guest in today's Scoop in Kamuning restaurant Kamayan Restaurant in Timog.

Cavitan will discuss PNA's efforts to help improve the literacy rate of the country while Alcina will talk about his quest for a Grandmaster's title in the coming World Memory Championships set Dec. 1 to 8 in Guangzhou, Chinese chefs promptly at 11 a.m. and will also serve new Sports Festival 3 p.m. today.

Pasay 5-stag derby today

THE "Mid Week Showdown 5-Stag Derby" unfolds today at the Hawk City Cockpit with seven Mac 100 fights on tap.

Defending champion Lakan Matanda leads the list of veteran gamefowl breeders from Batangas, Laguna, Cavite, Quezon Province, Rizal, Bulacan, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

The derby is a fitting up-to-date up-to-last match "PCC Big Bowl 5-Stag Derby" won by Emil Chua, Meridian Kalaghan, Tony Marfori and Lauro Bagaoisan jersey.

Interested parties may call Cherrie at (632) 882-1146 and (0917) 847-7302.

BY TOP CHOICE
At Santa Ana Park

Ababa-Echavez seizes two-shot lead with 72

DAVAO—Edgar Ababa and Paul Echavez birdied the last hole to crunch par 72 yesterday and seize a two-stroke lead after the penultimate round of the Davao National Pro-Am golf tournament co-presented by Samsung and Interior at the Apo Golf and Country Club here.

Ababa, a former winner on the local pro tour, and Echavez recovered from bad-to-worse bogeys by Nos. 11 and 12 with birdies on the 13th and 18th to wrest the solo lead at 145 going into tomorrow's final 18 holes.

Allen Ingles and national team standout Mark Fernando bounced at a strong title threat when they birdied the last three holes for a 71 to climb into a tie for second with first-round leader Dante Torres and Alquiedo Ishua in the P1 million championship marking Samsung's first foray into pro golf.

Torres and Ishua had a chance to grab a share of the lead but bogeyed the easy par-5 final hole for a 76.

Three other teams still had an outside chance of winning the tournament also supported by Kawasaki, Tri-corn, BCDA Golf, JG Construction, Hidajen Insurance, Philgolmore Cargo, Ideost, Mega Joy Trading, Alden Oriental Graphics, Canon, True World Brokerage Corp., Cargo Movers, MOR, Barbosa, Gozer and MM-RCS.

Mhen Ishua and Gen Nagal completed the 4-254 with Bobby Rosada and Dede Medilla marking a 75 to share fourth spot, just four strokes behind at 149.

Edwin Sanchez and Ian Arboleda were alone in ninth place at 150 after a 73 while Dan Cruz-Amin Balandres, Louie Escudero-Siegert Garcia, Tonyr Fernando-Larry Pasquil and Richard Bisbicos-Bobby Rojo were in a four-way tie at 151.

Fernando Siguenza and his partner Boy Sia meanwhile suffered the ignominy of being edged out for the last cut spot after losing in the countback. They ended up tied for 28th.

The course of Carolyn Cano and Sherry Zozobrado did not matter it as the final round.

TONY Lascuña (back to camera) exchanges high fives with partner Marvin Castillo after the amateur earned a long par putt on No. 16.

11th Sta. Lucia Tour season tees off today in Davao

DAVAO—The 11th season of the Sta. Lucia Golf Tour, the annual showdown of members from nine exclusive golf clubs flying the banner of the real estate giant, gets going today at the Sarah Golfers Rancho Palos Verdes Golf and Country Club course here.

Two hundred players are set to answer the two shotgun starts in the morning and afternoon for the official start of a course-hopping nationwide series organized by Sta. Lucia Realty and Development Inc.

Alta Vista of Cebu will shoot for a third straight overall crown in the event that will also bring the field to three such major championship courses in the Visayas and Luzon in the next two months.

Eagle Ridge and Rancho Palos Verdes, the other former overall champions in the first 10 editions of the Sta. Lucia Tour, are also expected to flex their might against another Visayas base, the other clubs.

Royale Tagaytay is also sending a full-sized delegation in what is seen to be a big push for the overall plum. The other clubs in the field are Orchard, Lakewood, Summit Point, Lake Caliraya, Santiago and Riviera Pines.

Aside from playing for their home clubs, the guest players will also chase top prizes put up by the other sponsors, (c) Electronics, Philippine Airlines, Silk Gold Dynamic Sports and Leisure Corp. and Master Sports Corp. The official brands are Maxx (Wilson), Maxfli (Cobra) and Manulatex (Ortensia).

The tournament also offers a hole-in-one package worth more than P500,000 and corporate-a residential lot at Rio de Oro subdivision in Cavite, a Suzuki Celerio, Changhong television set and a set of Bridgestone irons.

POC wants Pacman way for athletes

By Jane Manaore

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee believes the formula for success of Boxing's pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao can be applied to the national athletes.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday said he would ask the Filipino flyweight superstar to lend his conditioning coach or recruiters so they could provide a strict dietary regimen for the national team.

ANCA

Pacquiao, who left Monday night for the United States to kick off the promotional tour for his November fight against Mexican Antonio Margarito, has Colombian Alex Ariza as conditioning coach and American Ted Toscano as nutritionist.

"I'll try to get in touch with Manny," said Cojuangco. "He would probably provide some names who could help our athletes in terms of conditioning and nutrition."

Ariza was credited for improving Pacquiao's physical conditioning while Toss, who earned a Master's degree in nutrition science at California State University-Los Angeles, has been taking care of the Filipino champion's diet.

The partnership of Ariza and Toss was forged during Pacquiao's triumphant fight against Oscar Dela Hoya in 2008.

"We could ask Manny to provide us directions through the help of these experts," said Cojuangco. "This is a big step forward for the performance of our athletes in future [competitions]."

The local Olympic body has made athletes' nutrition as a priority with Cojuangco taking the lead in urging the Philippine Sports Commission to finance a proposed dietary program.

Cojuangco said the program should be implemented soon since the Asian Games in Guangzhou is just two months away.

LYCEUM'S Mary Jean Balse (left) blocks NU's Dindin Santiago.

SHAKEY'S V-LEAGUE

Lyceum makes it; KO duel up

By Cedrid P Tapay

LYCEUM MADE quick work of National University in claim a semifinal slot, even as Far Eastern U rolled past Ateneo in four sets yesterday to leave a knockout match for the last Final Four berth in the Shakey's V-League Season 7 Women's Conference at the FIBER Xpress Arena.

The Lady Pirates leaned on another brilliant performance by Mary Jean Balse to stymie the Lady Bulldogs, 25-13, 28-24, 25-23, and set up a best-of-three semifinal meeting with Adamson.

Rachel Anne Daquis, a member of the PEU squad that won the UAAP crown in 2007, fired 20 points as the Lady Tamaraws evened from a lethargic third set and prevailed, 25-11, 27-25, 11-25, 25-18.

With the victory, the Lady Tamaraws finished the quarterfinals tied with their victims at fourth with 6-6 count.

The Women-only do-or-die duel is set at 4 p.m. Sunday with the winner clashing with top seed San Sebastian-Recoletos in a best-of-three duel starting Thursday.

Daquis, who has received offers to play for CJH, Hannover and SC Langenhagen in the German Pro Volleyball League, delivered the game-winning hit after back-to-back hits from teammates Alyn Isaguirre and Jovelyn Gonzaga.

Also hoping to make it to the FF squad are 36-year-old Monday Torres, who played fourth in the Cans that lost Man 70-3, 17-year-old Nitz Melgar, and 23-year-old Bryan Bueng.

But the three will have to finish in the top 10 among Asians in the Sept. 19 Shin Lim Chinese Taipei Triathlon.

"If they don't make the standard there, we aren't recommend them anymore," said Carranza.

The country's raven placed 14th in the women's division and 11th in the men's division in the 2006 Doha Asiad.

Asiad Macaraeg clocked 2:05:37.63 against the gold medal time of 1:50:53.34 of Kazakhstan's Dmitry Gaag. Lungh finished in 2:16:46.69, 21 minutes slower than Chinese Wang Hongyu who bagged the gold.

Triathlon seeks inclusion of more Asiad bets

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TRIATHLON IS hoping to send four more athletes to the Asian Games in Guangzhou.

With only Asiad veteran Lee Lungh making it to the limited list of FIP athletes to the November Games, the Triathlon Association of the Philippines is recommending the inclusion of the returning Noh Gold and three other hopefuls.

Triathlon Vice Carranza said that Gold, who competed from the national team last March to join the international squad Team TSR, has requested to be reinstated to the Asiad contingent.

The 24-year-old Gold, former up in the Asian Duathlon and fourth in the Singapore Triathlon last year, placed eighth in the recent Cam Ran Bay Man 70.3.

Also hoping to make it to the FF squad are 36-year-old Monday Torres, who placed fourth in the Cans that lost Man 70.3, 17-year-old Nitz Melgar, and 23-year-old Bryan Bueng.

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Skipping HK a prudent move by PBA

INSIDE SPORTS

Ronnie Nathaniel

THE PBA board of governors showed good sense when it decided to cancel its scheduled annual planning session in Hong Kong, on Sept. 1 to 3, in the aftermath of the visa to hostage-taking incident at Quirino Grandstand that took the lives of nine people, including the hostage-taker.

So like the decision to call off the trip was made in the last minute, we can only remark, better late than never.

League chair Noli Pardo, in a statement, said they thought it "wise and prudent to hold the annual planning session in a local venue instead."

From our point of view, the prudent thing that should have been done always, was to hold the planning session in our own country.

We said, from the very beginning, made our sentiments known to PBA chair Pardo, a very fine gentleman who listened but pointed to the price of cancellation of travel bookings and airline tickets which he roughly estimated would cost the pro league ₱20,000 (about P904,000).

But in the final analysis, our contention was that, while it is indeed a considerable sum of money in these hard times, the risk of injury or worse, death in a crude difficult situation was far more important. It's because it concerned governments as government relations, as well as the livelihood and even the well-being of thousands of Filipino overseas workers in Hong Kong.

* * *

We have, over the past few years, questioned the need for the PBA board to hold its annual planning sessions abroad, particularly America, which is known as the most unfriendly tourist spot.

We could never appreciate the claim that the governors needed to get away from distractions during the board meetings if they were held in Manila since the governors were more accessible, with the reality of the distractions that abound in Manila.

Beyond that, our view was that, as representatives of 10 leading business enterprises in the country and with the PBA operating from a private association, they are imbued with a public dimension, it was incumbent on the pro league to support government efforts to attract tourists to the Philippines and to many other leading locations.

This other would surely not have been honored with such a major institution as the PBA deciding to hold its annual planning session abroad, year after year.

While the country seeks to bring in as many tourists as possible as our economy, to have the PBA hold its planning sessions in Macau or Hong Kong, or anywhere outside the country, is contrary in essence and does not answer the need of the times.

* * *

It would have been disturbing to see our officials traveling to Hong Kong at a time when the various tourist agencies in the country are busily soliciting reflections of government sentiments, if not policy, on the recently widely broadcasted crisis in the Philippines.

Thus there were the harsh criticisms and the overlooming anti-alien sentiments President Benigno Aquino III, the Philippine government and its law enforcement agencies.

While we agree with Pardo that the PBA didn't want to give the impression to our Hong Kong neighbors that we are insensitive to their pain, we have to disagree with the trip would have been equally insensitive to the sentiments against our President, the government and the country as a whole.

CORPORATE CYCLING Members of the Beacon Godfrome team race against time in the fifth round of the Philippine Premiere Cycling League races in Paranaque Avenue in Paranaque City. Beacon ended up third in the 32-kilometer race that was won by Nonoy Pina and rode for LPGMA, runner-up Saxxo Fabrications fourth and PLDT 9th. A two-day, 3-stage Tour of the Manila Coast is the next leg of the series sponsored by LPGMA, Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), Paralaque Yacht and Sports, Amerivan Vinyl and Godfrome. The 12-leg corporate cycling series tend up mid-after cycling team.

7 Pinoys competing in Maywood ringfest

SEVEN MEMBERS of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines team now training in the United States are now competing in the Annual Rise and Gold Tournament at the Maywood City Sports Complex in California.

Shop executive director Ed Picson said multi-titled featherweight Charly Suarez heads the FP team rostered to the tournament featuring some 280 boxers from all over the US.

The other FP roosters are light flyweight Victorio Saludar, flyweights Rey Saludar and Gerson Nieves, light welterweight Delfin Bobolar, heavyweight Reddy Duhay and lone female boxer Josie Gabuco.

The three other female boxers in the weekend pool are coached by Annie Albarosa are done in preparation for the World Women's Championships in Bridgetown, Barbados, from Sept. 9 to 19 and destined to skip the Maywood tournament.

Picson said the FP team was invited as "special guest participants" by Joe Escobera, one of the tournament organizers and a former head of the Southern California Boxing Association.

Ronnie Nathaniel

S'woods opens Luzvimin golf three-peat bid

MANILA SOUTHWOODS hopes to secure one strong and bold victory momentum for its bid for a three-straight championship in the PVGAP Luzvimin golf tournament which flies off today at the Del Monte Golf Club in Bukidnon.

The Carmona, Cavite-based golfers used a strong start to win, pitching their back-to-back title campaign in Subic and Del Monte before retiring to a 51-point victory over Alabang in the premier Diamond division.

But Southwoods expects a more challenging campaign this time as they go up against 19 other teams, headed by last Del Monte, which is out to flash its familiarity with the rough layout on a team built around Alaric Pico, Kristian Lorden, Kris Monsod and Pamela Gutierrez.

Regina de Guzman, who keyed Southwoods' runaway victory last year, will go for a third straight victory in the individual side of the tournament organized by the Women's Golf Association of the Philippines.

Joining De Guzman in the Southwoods team are Lou Roberto, Katrina Gonzales, Heather Ahern, Claire Ong, Claudine Cueto and Sandy Montano.

The other teams posing action in the seven-leg, five-to-count event are Alva Vista, Baesided Golf and Country Club, Camp Aguinaldo, Camp John Hay Caraballenang, Eden Golf and Country Club, Forest Hills, Manila Coral, Manila Golf Club, Negros Occidental Golf and Country Club, Pueblo de Oro, Riviera, Santa Elena, Tagaytay Highlands, Villamor Golf Club and Wack Wack.

Aim up for gains in the event, played under the Modstar scoring system, are tilts in Baby and Pearl divisions and individual honors in Classes A, B and C.

GORRES

Gorres undergoes major surgery

By Ronnie Nathaniel

ELADIO DORR Jr "The Beast" Gorres went under the knife at the Cebu Doctors Hospital Wednesday to correct a portion of his windpipe that was infected allegedly due to improper handling at the Las Vegas University Medical Center, where Gorres underwent emergency knee surgery in November last year.

A three-man team made up of Dr. Leo Almendras, Dr. Arnold Tan and Dr. Gary Rivera carried out the six-hour operation which Almendras described "as a big surgery."

Almendras said "everything went well" during the surgery.

He said the surgery done in Las Vegas "was not done properly. That is why he (Gorres) ended up with a narrow windpipe which developed scarring in that area."

Gorres had to undergo surgery after he found difficulty in breathing and eating.

Gorres collapsed and fell into a coma after scoring a stumbling win over Luis Hernandez of Colombia in Las Vegas last year.

Baseball exhibition pits US Navy team versus Patriots on Sunday

A RESPONDENT Baseball Tigray Hunters and a team from the visiting carrier USS George Washington will play an exhibition baseball game on Sunday at the Felino Maceda ballpark.

A joint project of baseball Philippines and the United States Embassy, the mercantile game will mark the first time a match is played between Filipino and Americans in 20 years and is part of the Navy's outreach program.

The Tigray team will be reinforced by Cebu slugger Migay Carranza, Batangas catcher John Aparis, and Subic 6 champions Mandy Pinchers Jhon Tiron, Jess Jon Robles and Charlie Labendes.

The Patriots will start RF ace pitcher Ernesto Jelo Cabaida.

Allan Anthony Reyes

Green Mile Run goes to Ayala Alabang

DARLYN MARTINEZ, Philippines-bound runners and environmentalists to join The Green Mile Run on Sept. 12 include Ayala Alabang, Mentorque, Promenade at the 3K, 5K and 10K races with go to Alumbo Foundation. Reg-istration forms are available at Casino Español at SM Mall of Asia, Montalba Adventure High School, Greenhills 2 and SM Megamall.

SPORTS

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

US, Spain gain last 16 slots

STANDINGS: Group A (Argentina 4-0, Serbia 3-1, Australia 2-2, Slovenia 2-2, Germany 1-3, Jordan 0-4) **Group B** (Spain 3-1, Greece 3-1, Russia 2-2, Croatia 2-2, Brazil 1-3, Lithuania 1-3, Canada 0-4) **Group C** (United States 4-0, Angola 3-1, Turkey 2-2, Iran 2-2, Germany 2-2, Puerto Rico 1-3, China 1-3, New Zealand 1-3, Lithuania 1-3, Canada 0-4)

ISTANBUL, TURKEY—Defending champion Spain advanced to the round of 16 at the basketball world championship on Wednesday and so, more surprisingly, did Angola.

The United States also made sure of winning Pool D by cruising past Iran, 88-51.

Angola made the last 16 four years ago, but it began this year's tournament with a 10-point loss to Serbia. It kept improving, however, and rallied from a 19-point deficit late in the game to stun Germany, 92-86, in overtime Wednesday.

"We made history for Angola today," coach Luis Magalhaes said. "My players never gave up, they are marvelous."

Spain came into the tournament as the reigning world and European champion and Olympic silver medalist. It lost a pair of its first three games and only made sure of advancing by defeating Lithuania, 91-57. Rudy Gay led Spain with 20 points and Fran Vazquez added 15.

Because winners of each of the six team groups have an easier draw in the single-elimination round in Istanbul, at least on paper, it means Spain could run into the United States in the quarterfinals.

The United States beat Spain for the Olympic gold medal in Beijing two years ago, but no players from that American team have returned to play at the worlds.

The United States and Iran may have some political tolerance, but there was no tension on the court in Istanbul. There was no suspense, either, as the Americans quickly established control.

"We just respected their basketball team and we just played a basketball game," US coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "There's no political aspect to my mind."

Kevin Love scored 15 points and Kevin Durant 12 for the undefeated Americans, who will meet the fourth-place team from Group B in the round of 16.

Croatia beat Tunisia, 94-84, and Slovenia edged Brazil 86-77 as the winners—and Brazil—joined the US in the last 16. Lithuania beat France 89-55 to win Group D. AP

EGYPT'S Emanuel Mankali shoots over USA's Andre Iguodala.

Unseeded Serbian derails Roddick's US Open bid; Murray, Clijsters thru

NEW YORK—Andy Murray cruised through his first match at the US Open while Andy Roddick crashed out on Wednesday, having over a bun fault call.

The fourth-seeded Murray had a 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 win over Slovakia's Lukas Lacko. Join other big-name players to make early exits.

Roddick, the 2003 US Open champion, went out in the second round with a 2-6, 7-5, 6-3, 7-6 (4) loss to 46th-ranked Janko Tipsarevic, whose make-or-break style paid off with his winners.

"He played very high risk and executed his shots well," said the ninth-seeded Roddick, whose exit left Roger Federer as the only past champion in the men's field. "I kept telling myself, 'You know, this has to have an explosive date on it.' It's five rounds, I needed another set for that."

Wimbledon finalist Tomas Berdych didn't make it past the first round, beaten, 7-6 (5), 6-4, 6-4, by France's Michael Llodra.

Former US Open champions Kim Clijsters and Venus Williams and French Open finalist Francesca Schiavone and Juan Martin del Potro all progressed, but the stars talking point to the women's draw was the dramatic collapse of 18th seeded Victoria Azarenka.

Trailing Gisela Dulko 5-7 in the first set in stifling conditions, Azarenka stopped suddenly while chasing a ball on the baseline, and crumpled to the ground.

Azarenka was treated like a victim of heat exhaustion—covered by a towel, shadowed by an umbrella, rolled off in a wheelchair, to pack on her neck and a doctor checking her pulse. She later revealed that she had fallen and hit her head during pre-match warmups. She was diagnosed with a mild concussion.

Already trailing 1-2 in the third, Roddick called up to a trainer, who turned to the official and asked, "What foot?"

When she told him it was his right foot, he replied, "That's impossible." Roddick then turned to chair umpire Enric Molina and, pointing first to his right foot, then his left, asked, "Was I? Was I gone in Dunn or THAT foot over to my corner?"

Molina replied: "Not in my matches."

A TV replay showed Roddick did commit a foot fault—but with his left foot. AP

TIPSAREVIC

Latest live 2010 US Open coverage at Inside Tennis (NEXTGEN 36) nightly, up to half. 11 & 11 a.m. (till Sept. 11 at midnight). Replays start at 12 a.m. daily.

Honest teen gives up golf medal

MILWAUKEE—Each Sunday, Jason Stahl would relax his shoulders and his head and toss many golf clubs on his bag a couple hours after winning a junior Wisconsin PGA tournament.

But Stahl sets rules, and the 14-year-old from southern Wisconsin made a decision that might surprise most people: He disqualified himself and then withdrew his medal.

"I knew I couldn't live with myself if I kept that medal," Stahl said during a phone interview Wednesday, his first day of high school.

Stahl shot a 77 to win the boys 13-14 age division at the PGA junior championship in Greendale. Then he looked at the scorecard of his playing partner, Danny Burke. Next to Burke's name on the card, a fellow competitor had written 81 instead of 85, which was Burke's actual score.

STAHL

While the deviation was clear, Stahl couldn't help but cry. His mentor, Cole Wood, had to call Stahl's father, Bob, to pick him up. AP

Lhuillier in Liga finals

M. LHUILLIER Rosetta Pulido-Cebu leads an early double-digit lead on the way to an 89-79 drubbing of Tarsian-Laguna to claim the first championship berth in the Tournament of the Philippines Wednesday night at the Cebu Coliseum in Cebu City.

Stephen Pulido drilled 15 of his team-high 22 points from beyond the arc as the Sibbu Cebu built an early double-digit lead that they never relinquished.

The Sibbu will clash with winner of the other semifinal series between Manuela Centrial and Cebu Silver Tagaytay.

The best-of-five championship starts on Sept. 7 in Cebu City. Jeanne M. Flayo

Woods feels next triumph is happening soon

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS—Tiger Woods, haunted by a wrong display at the Barclays tournament, has a good chance to qualify for the rest of the BellSouth playoff series at the Deutsche Bank Championship starting on Friday.

The American world number one, now elevated from fourth with Elin, has yet to win this season but felt he was close to his love in Ridgewood Country Club last week.

"If I would have gotten a little bit better in the middle two rounds, then I would have been right there," Woods said referring after signing off with a four-under par 67. "I haven't won all year but this was a week that I was very close at."

Woods climbed from 11th in the BellSouth points list to 6th and must remain in the top 70 to qualify for the third event, four under par 67. "I haven't won all year but this was a week that I was very close at."

Woods climbed from 11th in the BellSouth points list to 6th and must remain in the top 70 to qualify for the third event, four under par 67. "I haven't won all year but this was a week that I was very close at."

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ENRIQUEZ

Underbone series: Enriquez scores upset; Tan dominates

SUSUME PELLER off convincing victories recently, with Arbuthery Enriquez and Josh Reuben Tan conquering their divisions in the fifth leg of the 2010 Philippine Underbone King Championships at the Enchanted Kingdom Kart Track in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Enriquez clocked six minutes and 35.467 seconds to halt Mona Ruanto's four-race win streak in the premiere 150cc Open class. Ruanto finished over 900 seconds behind.

After teammate Paul Mark Dobbala figured in a spill in the Final race, Enriquez took charge for Suzuki and dominated the 12-lap race to complete a sweep.

Tan, on the other hand, savored the lead in the final three laps to beat Ginrey Pig to the 150cc MTBT domestic Scooter class.

Tan finished in six minutes and 28.541 seconds while Pig clocked in 6.264 seconds later. Steve Silva, Contributor

Marcelo sweeps karting series

MARCELO

ETHMD MARCELO displayed more flawless performance in bagging the ROK Overall and ROK Senior crowns during the 50th leg of the 2010 Magnolia Pro-motor Karting Series (north) at the ESC Oval in Laguna.

The 40-year-old clocked completed the 10-lap race in 14 minutes and 50.079 seconds, or 1.467 seconds ahead of second division runner-up Roby Dexito.

John Thrubbs and Art Reuters claimed the next two spots.

Marcelo also claimed the ROK Senior pleas.

Other winners were Ilenio (ROK Junior), Oliver Aquino (Formula 4), Espers, Onering Mendoza (202 class) and Philip Lim (ISO/Shifter).

THE NATIONAL ladies rugby team resumes training after beating Malaysia for the Division B title of the recent Asian Ladies Rugby Sevens championships in Guangzhou.

Sharks, Bombers whip FIBL opening-day foes

TWO-TIME MVP Manny Chandler and Vladimir Hingh combined for 57 points to power the Blue Sharks to a 73-69 victory over the Kings at the start of the 2010 FIBL India Cup at the Makati Coliseum last Sunday.

Trailing 62-54, the Sharks came roaring back and outscored the Kings, 19-5, in an eight-minute stretch to turn the tide in their favor.

"Good closing we showed there down, broke their rhythm," said Sharks head coach Cuddy Winco of the Kings. "We were able to capitalize again on our fast-break points and concentrate on our defense."

Ridwin Mojica's debuted with 15 rebounds for the Blue Sharks, while Amir Clemente added 10 boards.

In the second game, rookie SJ Chamberlain fired 32 points to lift the Bombay Bombers past the Knights, 84-77.

Glenn Clement also had 16 points and 16 rebounds for the Bombers. Steve Silva, Contributor

Editor Raul G. Pangalangan ● Associate Editor Carmela S. Narisma

BUSINESS

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■ **Sugar output seen** down by 5% /B9

RP may miss goal of reducing poverty by half

Millennium dev't target deemed no longer realistic

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY is no longer in a position to attain the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty by 2015, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Juliano-Soliman said.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) serves as a common to which member countries of the United Nations are committed. Under one MDG category, UN members have until 2015 to reduce poverty incidence by half from levels seen in 1990.

In the case of the Philippines, poverty incidence should be cut to only 12.5 percent five years from now.

"The 12.5-percent poverty rate that we ought to achieve is no longer realistic given the latest level of poverty," Juliano-Soliman said yesterday said in a briefing held at the Asian Development Bank of the Philippines.

According to the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), poverty incidence in the country stood at 33 percent as of 2006.

The 2009 poverty incidence figure will be released next month. Based on some analysts' projections, the poverty rate may not have improved from the 2006 level.

The NSCB said the country's poverty incidence likely stood at above a third of the population.

Soliman said that according to the latest Social Weather Stations survey on self-rated poverty, 45 percent of the country's

BB

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Sept. 2, 2010
44.950

Shares close higher

LOCAL STOCKS yesterday rallied to a 22-month high on the back of bullish sentiment that swept through Wall Street overnight.

Extending gains for the third straight day, the main share Philippine Stock Exchange Index surged by 2.92 percent, or 17.06 points, to 1,498.34.

The market took its cue from the better-than-expected factory output in the United States and China. It was the highest finish recorded by the index since it hit 1,507.64 on Dec. 27, 2007.

Dealers said the strong US market boosted the risk appetite of foreign investors, thereby driving up the

SHARES B11

BUSINESS *Friday*

MARIA Minerva "Baby" Panopio crafts pieces of jewelry from discarded paper and plastic rolls, glue/mods and waxes.

NECKLACE and bracelets crafted by Panopio's Alcobel Alliance.

Pangasinan villagers make jewelry from trash

Text and photos by Johanna Mendoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

MANGALDAN, Pangasinan—Known in her village as the lady with a bag full of seeds, Maria Minerva Panopio has taught a thing or two to this town's residents on how to protect the environment while earning a decent living.

"I've always been interested in promoting the protection of the environment," says Panopio, a former graphic artist.

It is common to see Panopio picking up litter from the street and advising passersby good words to be planted in their ears (smiles).

At 58, she has achieved her lifelong dream of founding a pro-environment livelihood project when she led the opening of a community jewelry business in her village in Buenlag that here in May.

But the pieces of jewelry that Panopio and other villagers make under their store, called Alcobel Alliip., are not the usual, mass-production type items. Instead, these are fashioned from paper collected from election campaign materials.

"After the election, I saw posters and flyers lying around and I thought: they would make good materials for jewelry," says Panopio. She got the idea from a training on paper beads making that she undertook in February, under the initiative of the provincial government's solid waste management office.

Panopio says she realized for the proper time before getting the business off the ground. The right time came after the May 10 elections, when the supply of paper and plastic was high.

Local politicians have supported her venture by donating unused posters, fliers and sample ballots to the project.

With her house stacked with boxes of leftover campaign materials, Panopio taught six village mates how to craft jewelry from paper scrap. Together, they produced their first batch of cuffs, composed of 250 pieces of necklaces, used as identification card straps, for the employees of Mangaldan's town hall.

The process begins by cutting the paper in small pieces then rolling them with glue until there are of the desired width. The snippets will then be dipped in emulsion to give them a shiny appearance as well as a waterproof coating. The paper beads will then be strung with glass beads and stones in fixed bracelets, necklaces, earrings, or combinations.

WITH loans of leftover campaign materials, Panopio taught six village mates how to produce jewelry from paper scrap.

Three months later, over 30 women and men in the town participate in the trade, including their children who help roll the pieces of paper into spirals.

With its unique products fashioned by hand, Alcobel Alliip. sells bracelets at P98 each, rosary beads at P50, mobile phone holders at P30, necklaces at P90 and earrings at P20 a pair. "You wouldn't even know it's paper," says Panopio.

For each piece made, a villager is guaranteed a profit of not less than P10, she says. "It's a reason to motivate them, given no big outing pero the mood of throwing away or burning paper, it's better to turn them into money," the says.

Alcobel Alliip. has ready buyers from the provincial solid waste management office and the Pangasinan Pantabong Center in Bonifacio town, but some villagers also sell the products on their own.

"It's not just about profiting, it's also about helping resolve the serious waste management problem that we are having right now," says Panopio. She says many villagers have also stopped gambling and playing bingo since their leisure time when the livelihood program started.

"Most of the ones making paper jewelry here have no regular jobs," she says.

Panopio offers free paper jewelry-making training for individuals and groups like wants to make people realize that every person can contribute to minimizing the negative impact of environmental on the environment.

Having already used up a fourth of their stock of campaign materials, Panopio and the other villagers have begun gathering usable materials from the trash.

"I will be sending my bag full of litter, like paper and stuff, in the next few months," she says.

Can our brand do an 'Intel-inside'?

Q: WE'RE SO happy that your column is now paying attention to the marketing of technology and industrial brands. It's no longer almost always dealing with consumer products and service brands. We'd like to follow up on your late Friday's column regarding the branding of technology products.

We're like a Phelps-Dodge supplying and selling wires for horizontal and vertical communications. We've met yet a Phelps-Dodge knows for its premium and even super premium quality wiring products. But our brand has as much quality. To quickly attain a Phelps-Dodge-like brand equity, can we do what Intel did as a component? Can our brand qualify quite in brand equity by doing an "Intel-inside" campaign? We're thinking of making our customers clients to include an "Intel-inside" violator in their advertisement and flyers for their condo or commercial construction projects.

A: Kindly speaking, a real property project hardly qualifies as a technology product. But communication raises do make us a component product used inside the walls and ceilings of constructed houses and buildings. So yours is a component brand. But are construction wires a technology product?

That depends on what is a technology product. Check PCs, printers, and other PCs, is the manufacturing machine. In his 1999 book, "Technobrands," quotes an HP executive as regarding technology and branding as to their opponents. That's because technology is about "change, change, change." In contrast, branding is about "consistency, consistency, consistency."

In other words, leadership in the technology markets is driven by continuing technological and product innovations. So to run it construction wires are a technology product, ask yourself: "Does the product leadership of Phelps-Dodge come from continuing technological and product innovations?"

Intel is the full technology product because its four brand, e.g., Dell, HP, and other PCs, is the manufacturing machine. Intel is a microprocessor that's a component used in the making of, say, a PC, a final product marketed by another company.

So let's go along with your analogy as a component brand and diagnose things to search for the right answer to your question. Let's undertake our diagnosis on your brand-needed component brand Intel and find out how its Intel-inside campaign succeeded.

It was in July 1991 that Intel launched its "Intel-Inside" campaign. Over a decade and half before, Intel was known to have invested billions of dollars in cutting edge technology in its continuing innovations of the microprocessor, and spent her billion more to assure its processor's performance and reliability. When Intel learned that its processors were not trademark protected, it decided to promote its brand to PC customers as "THE microprocessor."

Intel became the processor you put a PC component in (even although a key one), it was cited for the campaign to work with the PC manufacturers. One of the things that the Intel marketing team did to learn how to effectively do this was to benchmark against companies that successful in marketing their component products to other companies in need of the component product for their finished products. The team found the cost of Nutrasweet particularly useful.

Nutrasweet is an aspartame brand. Aspartame is an artificial sweetener that was discovered to be 180 to 200 times sweeter than sugar. As sweetener for such products as baked goods, beverages, shake mix, instant coffee and so on, its required amount for sweetening was extremely minute and therefore just as economically cost-effective.

Then they interviewed three companies adopting Nutrasweet and agreeing to a co-branding arrangement. When they asked what convinced those adopting companies to use Nutrasweet and to agree to co-branding, explicitly displayed in their packaging, they got answers like the following:

"We had so much to gain in placing the Nutrasweet brand side by side with our own brand."

"It was to our competitive advantage to co-brand with Nutrasweet because it was a more known brand than ours."

"The Nutrasweet brand added value to our own because the Nutrasweet brand equity was stronger."

So there's one answer to your question. If your new brand, say, 3Meg or Pigeon, stands to gain to co-branding with your Intel component brand, then your brand can be your new brand's "Intel-inside" brand.

But while this is an answer, you have to be cautious. Will an established and competitively dominant leader brand like a 3Meg find in your component brand such a value added for a co-branding agreement? If 3Meg will not, will Pigeon find it competitively advantageous to how and be the exclusive brand to your component brand?

So here's the other answer to your question stated in a few questions form.

Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at Marketing@inquirer.net or drnedmarketing@gmail.com. Ned Brad

MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberts & Andy Roberts

BOC eyes new monitoring system

Customs hopes to curb smuggling, hike income

By Bancel W. Domingo

THE BUREAU of Customs is preparing a new three-lane system for inbound shipments amid efforts to curb smuggling and raise revenues, Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said yesterday.

Purisima said he has instructed Customs Commissioner Angelito A. Alvarez to develop a system with "super green lane," green lane and red lane for different categories of cargoes.

"This has been done in Indonesia a few years ago and (their) collections soared," the finance chief said. "It is important that we study this carefully and we will use all information available to us since we can't see what goods are incoming as soon as the ships leave their ports of origin."

Purisima did not elaborate on how the planned new system will improve on the existing three-lane scheme with the color codes green, yellow and red.

However, he said the DOF and BOC will work with shipping companies and port operators regarding the classification of cargoes for the appropriate customs lanes.

"There may be a group of companies exempting every lane and they themselves will help us police the system," Purisima said.

He explained that the initial idea is that goods from industries that have been identified as priority areas for economic integration within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will pass through the super green lane.

"This involves cargoes that will not be taxed, just like domestic shipments," Purisima said. "This will include goods that enter and exit the country very quickly, like semiconductors."

The finance chief said the new green lane will be somewhat similar to that the DOF will work with the Department of Trade and Industry on the classification of imports.

As for the new red lane, Purisima said, this will serve as a wave for oft-smuggled goods "that will pass through strict questioning and inspection."

Cargoes that do not qualify for the green lane for speedy clearance and release of shipments without physical inspection.

Further, the yellow lane is for cargoes whose documents need to be reviewed, while the red lane is for goods that need physical inspection.

Purisima said he has asked Alvarez to fast-track the implementation of the new system, which would be rolled out at the Port of Manila before introducing it to other ports.

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JUSTIC CORPORATION

Shares . . .

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lend index.

There were about three gainers for every single decliner at the stock market. Value turnover was fairly active, 979 billion.

The financial, mining/oil and holding firm sectors led the day's rally.

"Today's trading activity was buoyed by the renewed interest of foreign investors in the markets. In fact, the share of foreign investors to total traded value reached 49.7 percent, which is above the average share of foreign investors to total traded value during the past eight months of 33.5 percent," PSE president and chief executive officer Hermogenes O. Esguerra said in a statement.

On Wednesday, the slowly watched Dow Jones Industrial Index snapped six straight losses, or 2.94 percent, to climb at 10,288.47.

All-Capital noted that the top index movers for the day were Ayala Corp., Bank of the Philippine Islands, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Energy Development Corp. and Alliance Global Inc. All issues contributed at least five points to the main index. Doris C. Dumlao

PLDT SUPPORTS THE NET GROUP 2010 BADMINTON CUP CHALLENGE

PLDT Corporate Business Group recently supported the 2010 Badminton Cup Challenge hosted by The Net Group (TNG) at the Vasco Philippines Badminton Club. The one-day event attracted a strong and keen representation from TNG tenants and their respective teams in a friendly but highly competitive play.

The Net Group, one of the Philippines' leading property developers, is the premier office developer in Fort Bonifacio Global City with a 130% leased portfolio that includes the Net One Center, Net Square, Net Cube, Net Quad and Net Plaza.

Present during the opening from left to right are: PLDT AVP & Head of Enterprise Consultancy Services Rosalito Mendoza ; TNG Managing Director Bob Barrera and PLDT Enterprise Consultant Rodel Dario

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acer

INVITATION TO BID

INVITATION TO BID

Fire and square

LAST WEEK everybody thought it was safe to buy property in the country along some thin resort cuts that combined, unpolished, bothered and bewildered everyone in real estate.

The cuts involved the 24-hectare property known as the Manresk Cuts, around near the Ayala Heights subdivision in Quezon City it is a prime property worth billions of pesos in today's booming real estate market.

The Manresk family has been in possession of the property for the past 90 years. They had documents showing that their patriarch, Severino Manresk II, bought the land from the government in the 1920s.

Unfortunately for the Manresk family part of the Quezon City hall, specifically the registry of deeds, was gutted by a typhoon. Late in 1988, barangay officials the Manresks received a "reconstituted title" from the city government.

But in 1998, about 10 years after the fire of mysterious origin, another family had claim to the property. A certain Teresita Barque-Hernandez claimed that her father, Primo Barque, bought the land during the Marcos regime in 1975.

The Barques asked the government for the "reconstituted title" to be issued in their name instead, which the Manresk family of course contested.

The two sides have been fighting it out in court over the past 12 years. The case dragged on because the court, at first, ruled against the Barque claim, leaving the Manresk family. Later, all of a sudden, the court ruled in favor of the Barque group.

The Court of Appeals for one ordered the cancellation of the Manresk title and instead that the "reconstituted title" be issued to the Barque group.

The plot thickened when another group came forward to lay claim to the prime property—the couple Felicisa and Ricardo Mandaba.

The Mandaba couple submitted that the Manresk family bought the land. It was just that the purchase was not valid because the Manresk family did not have a so-called "deed of conveyance."

And so the Manresks went to the Land Management Bureau for a copy of such document. They were denied.

The Manresk family finally got copies of the document from—get ready for this—the National Library.

After years of litigation—i.e., huge amounts in attorney's fees and what have you—the Barque group finally ruled in favor of the Manresk family. Well, partly.

I said "partly" because the high court said that the Court of Appeals did not have the authority to cancel titles, remember, the Court of Appeals ordered the cancellation of the Manresk title).

That authority belongs to the regional trial court, the high tribunal said.

Also, the Supreme Court ordered the Court of Appeals, not the BIR, to hear the merits of the case and resolve the evidence, so that the high court en banc would determine the real owners of the property.

The case is not yet over even after almost 12 years of litigation. And all because of a fire in a government office!

This can happen again. Look after your titles. They may not be safe.

* * *

THE Aquino (first 63 administration needs to fill up more than three dozen positions in the executive branch. Occupying those positions are still the carryover appointees of the previous one administration of Gloria Arroyo.

One of them is the head of the Clark International Airport Corp., which owns and operates the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, named after the father of Gregorio Araneta, also BIG.

Still heading CIAC is Nestor Ilhagat. He was among the so-called "midnight appointees" of the previous administration.

Yet, if you look at the record of CIAC, you would think that the company needed the immediate attention of the new administration. The CIAC on for has over brought over a single investor into the airport project in Clark.

The CIAC, under Mangan, almost succeeded in getting a private investor in the airport complex, but not quite. For the past two years or so, a group in the CIAC was said to have been trying to rehitrod a deal (Common CIAC real estate venture known as Global Pride).

Members of the committees were the Al-Habash group (forward) and the local group Pride, which was said to be composed of politicians from Batangas.

The CIAC board drew out the deal, apparently acting under orders from the Palace under the Gida, because the deal was said to be bad for the government.

Under the proposal, Al-Habash would take over operations of all the airport terminals in Clark. The previous administration of CIAC staged a strike.

It was a losing proposition for the government. The Al-Habash firm would give the government P20 million for 25 years in exchange for complete control of DMIA. In those years, the CIAC may export the airport to earn P1.0 trillion.

Then, do the math.

Food and Drink Asia 2010 and Food Fraternity 2010 is the most talked-about limited food product and marketing event is now officially open. Entrepreneurs Carlo Puzon (left), Chairman of the opening ceremony, Abet Guidote (from left), Josephine Miranda, Executive Vice President, ABS-CBN Integrated Group, Chef Robert Francisco, President, Hotel & Restaurant Chef Association of the Philippines, Engr. Abet Rosario, President, Food Caterers Association of the Philippines, Pastor Jose, Co Chairman Philippine Coffee Board, Sergio Ortiz-Luis, Jr., President, Philippine Exporters Confederation, Inc., Salvador Salonga, Representative from Department of Agriculture, Manuel Cruz, President/Phil. Amusement Recreation Association, Inc., Marvin Gaoni, Project Manager ABS Management Group. This expo will run until from September 2 - 2010. Happening at once after is the most prestigious food industry event in the Philippines, Asia Food Expo on September 9-11, 2010 World Trade Center, Manila Philippines.

Gov't: Tax cheats' days are numbered

By Raoul M. Dantes

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is building up cases against smugglers, tax evaders and erring public servants found guilty of corruption through its Bevy ng Bayan website, finance chief Cesar V. Purisima yesterday said.

"We have forwarded the tips to the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Internal Revenue and other concerned agencies," Purisima said.

"We are giving [the agencies] 60 days to process the data."

However, the finance chief called on those providing information on the government to submit evidence with which to build a case.

Purisima some of the reports lacked crucial information.

Launched barely a month ago, the Bevy ng Bayan has accumulated 1,013 reports as of Thursday.

Purisima said citizens' involvement turned out to be as helpful. He cited the tax evasion case filed last week against businessman Manuel L. Gaw Jr., which was based on a tip. That tip did not go through the government's website.

The BIR filed the suit with the Department of Justice. It accused Gaw of defrauding the government by underdeclaring his income and misqualifying dutiable land sales to 2007 and 2008. Gaw's total liabilities reportedly reached P1.3 billion.

"We ask [the public] to help by giving us enough information to work on," Purisima said. "I believe there are many Filipinos who really want to help stop tax evasion and smuggling."

The website, www.pmg.bayan.com, is linked with their book and Twitter accounts.

It enables information through feeds in RSS format—an Internet technology that ensures widespread dissemination of content.

Four people have the biggest stake in anti-corruption efforts these days: are the ones most affected when taxes and customs duties are not paid, Purisima said.

"If government's revenue collections improve, we can help the poor with better social services especially in health care and education," he said.

The homepage shows an old-fashioned, classroom-type black chalkboard on which a person is leaning and is about to write something.

Visitors to the website are given a choice of filing a report that either expresses praise or complaint, by clicking either the "Puede" or "Hekhnee" icons.

The reports filed are not shown to the public, but a web page shows a count of them from the number of things.

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Plant to ease power shortage in the Visayas

By Jerry R. Rivera

KEPCO-SPC Power Corp. (KSPC), a joint venture between Korea Electric Power Corp. and SPC Power Corp., is expected to complete its 200-megawatt (MW) coal-fired power plant in Naga, Cebu next year.

According to Eepco Philippines chief E. ramos officer Ji Kim, the joint venture has already completed over 41 percent of the Naga coal facility as of June 2010.

Kim said that the joint venture could begin operating the first 100-MW unit of the coal facility by February 2011. The second 100-MW unit may go online next May.

Completion of the facility will help ease the power supply shortfall in the Visayas. The region is now suffering from rotating brownouts. The National Grid Corp. of the Philippines said that, as of yesterday, the Visayas grid continued to post a supply deficit of 265 MW. Although there are no immediate plans to expand the coal-fired power plant, the company is keen on reviewing power demand forecasts to see whether it will be necessary to expand the facility, Kim said.

Last February, SPC Power and the joint venture had signed many financing agreements for the $491-million coal plant.

Doosan Heavy Industries of South Korea is currently undertaking the engineering, procurement and construction of the plant.

RP . . .

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population thought of themselves as poor last year. Self-rated poverty is usually higher than the actual poverty incidence reported by the government. Still, it provides a picture of what the actual figure may be.

Heads of concerned government agencies—social welfare, labor, education, and budget departments—will be tasked to organize the new poverty reduction goal of the tiqatsu administration.

"We will conduct a review [of the country's poverty reduction potential] and set a new target," Soliman said.

Although the government boasts of economic growth, economists believe that the country's growth may mean little for the poor since poverty incidence remains high.

The problem is blamed on the lack of education and insufficient job opportunities for the masses. Also, the absence of a firm population control policy has been cited by some as a key reason why many Filipinos remain poor despite growth of the economy.

Soliman said the Aquino administration would aggressively pursue poverty reduction initiatives, such as the conditional cash transfer program. The government has already tapped finance institutions, like the ADB, for funding, she added.

Local franchisers see 20% sales growth in 2010

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ASSOCIATION of Philippine Franchisers Inc. (AFI) expects its 119 members to register a collective sales growth of 15-20 percent this year, from last year's P965.5 billion.

In a briefing yesterday, AFI president Paulo Tibig attributed the projected growth to the recovering economy rebound, which helped boost sales of its members' products and services, as well as increase AFI's membership base to the current 119 from 88 at the start of the year.

He related that the hospitality sector was one of the more resilient sectors during the recession, proven by the 30-40-percent sales growth that AFI members registered from 2008 to 2009.

"The franchising sector was not as hard hit by the recession as other industries. More and more people view now that a good way to go into business is through franchising. There's a higher level of awareness and interest in franchising now," he said.

AFI vice president for public relations and marketing Ned Delgado added that most local franchisers were now taking their concepts overseas—proof of the dynamism of the industry and its bright prospects for growth.

AFI members who have gone overseas include Potato Corner in the United States and Goto King in Abu Dhabi. Other members such as Bonchon and Aguadeva are negotiating entry into Jakarta and an undisclosed Asian location, respectively.

"Many of our members are also present in the countryside, so we help spur economic growth in these areas," Delgado said.

Tibig related that 40% involve solos, with their more than 6,000 stores nationwide, provided employment to almost 33,000 individuals. This employment number should grow in proportion to the market.

In terms of product mix, AFI executive vice president Richard Lanz said the majority of the group's members were still in the food business at 55 percent.

The ratio of food to non-food businesses, however, had significantly grown closer over the past few years, he said, starting from an 80:20 mix in favor of food a few years back to the current 55:45 ratio.

"Now, even services are being franchised, so there has been a marked increase in the percentage of non-food businesses [over time]. By next year, the ratio may even become 50:50," he said.

AFI will be holding its 9th Philippine Franchise Show on Sept. 30-Oct. 3, in a bid to further increase awareness of and interest in franchising in the country.

Tibig said this year's event should attract 25,000 attendees, more than double last year's 12,000 participants.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO STOCKHOLDERS OF UEM DEVELOPMENT PHILS., INC.

The undersigned, Kenny Sy, in (the "Bidder"), seeks to acquire up to 66,000,000 common shares of UEM Development Phils., Inc. (the "Company"), representing 70.21% of the outstanding capital stock of the Company, at the purchase price of P3.00 per share. The Bidder also made a binding commitment of the acquisition of 22,500,000 common shares of the company, which approximately represent 23.49% of the outstanding capital stock of the Company (the Sale Shares"). Note the following stockholders of the Company: (1) Lee Hunting Holdings Corp., (2) Lee Tuck Keng Holdings Corp., (3) Tuckwell Corp., (4) Mutual Holdings Corp., (5) Bonita Investments, and (6) Redgate Sdn. Considering that the Sale Shares comprise more than 10% of the outstanding capital stock of the Company, the Bidder is undertaking the Tender Offer to acquire shares under the Tender Offer rules set out in Section 19 of the Securities Regulations Code and its implementing rules. The tender offer will subject to the Terms of the Tender Offer and the Bidder's Tender Offer Report to Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") Form 19-1 to be filed with the SEC and the Philippine Stock Exchange on September 02, 2010.

KENNY SY

Congratulations to MAN Automotive Concessionaires Corporation for the successful launch of the new TGS Series from:

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Globe connects to SMEs in Visayas and Mindanao with the Negostar Fair

Globe recently rolled out the Negostar Fair to small and medium sized enterprises (SME) in Visayas and Mindanao marking the latest business tools and exclusive deals designed for entrepreneurs readily available to all of them. In addition, the Globe Negostar Fair featured an inspirational talk by motivational guru, Francis Kong on the qualities that make "a breakthrough entrepreneur".

The Negostar Fair, spearheaded by Globe Business is about learning innovations and discovering tools that can help grow one's business a notch. At the same time, it allows entrepreneurs to share their experiences to help keep them on track to achieving their goals.

In his talk, Kong said of breakthrough entrepreneurs must commit all his time, energy and ideas to his business, focus on the solutions and not the problem, and should not harbor feelings of dissatisfaction over his last success. He also said that one must continue learning, know one's business philosophy, share the pie and develop people skills. He also believes that technology is crucial for business growth and encourages entrepreneurs to explore new ways to take their business further.

"You don't have to fight each other to succeed. The pie is big so let's expand the pie and make the market bigger," Kong said during the Negostar Fair in Davao held at Ayo Vieo Hotel. "Also, remove any feeling of insecurity. What you are good at or where you excel, let that be your platform and grow from there. Insecurity is dangerous."

Kong added, "Involve your family in the business. Let them have fun in the business and share the profits. You must know your business philosophy. Share with the community when you see your business grows."

To aid entrepreneurs in growing their business and help them reach their aim, the Globe Negostar Fair brings best-priced innovative and reliable communication tools for SMEs in Visayas and Mindanao. Globe Business offered exclusive deals such as the Sit Laptop Bundle, the affordable laptop and broadband package at only P499/month; and Biz Talk, its lowest priced postpaid plan for unlimited calls to all Globe and TM subscribers at just P999/month, during the Negostar Fair.

GPS Tracker was also among the services showcased to entrepreneurs during the event. This allows SMEs to monitor their vehicles in real-time using the Global Positioning System (GPS). "They can track the exact location of their trucks and cargo en route to their destinations. TxtConnect, a text broadcast service that could send messages up to a thousand pre-registered recipients, was also introduced to SMEs. Entrepreneurs could use this to announce a sale and market their products and services, or provide updates and info to employees.

SMEs can make use of the Inventory Ordering System (IOS), a complete easy-to-use solution to supply chain management. Best for businesses that operate multiple sites, IOS enables inventory and sales monitoring, automated invoicing, and procurement, as well as receiving orders and reports via SMS or web, all in a simple web-based and self-service set up.

Globe Business also highlighted its Data service which provides direct internet for fast and steady connections at speeds of more than 6 Mbps. This is suited for SMEs that require reliable connectivity and have heavy broadband requirements, as they get the same download and upload speeds. Another offer unique to Globe is Business Plus, the value-enabled postpaid plan that enables SMEs to choose the mobile services that best suits them. Entrepreneurs can pick and mix their preferred plans and pay only for what they need.

"We have put together great business deals and new enabling tools for entrepreneurs, which they can see and experience at the Negostar Fair. We bring them the latest technologies that would help enhance their operations. And we even created easy and convenient for them to use in their business," said Manny A. Aliganga, Head of Corporate and SME Segments at Globe Business. "We made sure we understand the needs of SMEs so that Globe Business can provide for these needs in the best possible way."

For more information on Negostar, call the Globe Business Hotline at (02) 730-1388 or log on to globebusiness.com/negostar.

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BUSINESS

Food firm to sell P2B in debt paper

CONCEPCION (RFI) Food and beverage company RFM Corp. is raising up to P2.5 billion in fresh funds from the sale of debt paper to select institutional investors.

RFM plans to use the proceeds to refinance outstanding secured obligations and augment funds for capital spending, the company said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

The disclosure said RFM's board recently approved an offering of fixed or floating corporate notes with a term of five years and one day. The debt paper will be be secured by a pledge on the corporation's existing and future assets, the disclosure said.

The board was likewise authorized to appoint financial institutions to handle the offering of corporate notes.

It was earlier announced that the company had rolled out a P1.2 billion capital spending program this year that sought to beef up its production capacity to meet rising consumer demand.

The company said it was a prioritizing expansion activities to support revenue targets with better cost structures and operating efficiencies.

RFM posted a net income of P395 million in the first six months of the year, higher by 103 percent from the profit recorded in the same period last year. It is targeting to hit a net profit of P680 million for the whole year. Doris C. Dumlao

Sy buys holding firm to handle big-ticket infra investments

By Doris C. Dumlao

HENRY SY JR., the eldest son and namesake of the country's wealthiest man, plans to take over holding firm UBM Development Philippines which he intends to use as his publicly listed platform for big-ticket investments in infrastructure and public utilities.

In a statement, Sy said he had received letter to a binding deal with five UBM shareholder groups to acquire 22.5 million common shares in the million, representing about 45.5 percent of the little-traded holding firm. The group of businessman Lao Weixin was reportedly the seller of the said shares.

But Sy expects to acquire more UBM shares after a tender offer to all other shareholders, which starts on Sept. 6 and ends on Oct. 5 this year. With a total outstanding shares of 60.46 million, the total acquisition cost of the listed entity could reach about P196 million, he said in the statement.

The deal was valued at P3 per share or a 20-percent premium over the price at which UBM shares were last traded on Jan. 28, 2008 at P2.50 per share.

Sy, who has invested in infrastructure assets of his family's core businesses, is the president and chief executive officer of Universal Gold Corp., of the Philippines (SGCP). In March 2010, his company, One Taipan Holdings, acquired a 30-percent interest in the Philippines' national transmission network for P338 million.

Analysts said the UBM might eventually be used as a backdoor listing vehicle for Sy's SGCP investment. But Sy said there was no plan on that yet. "We will disclose when we have definite a plan," he said in a text message.

Sy is interested to participate in the public-private sector partnership being pursued by President Benigno Simeon Aquino III to building much needed infrastructure facilities in the country.

"We believe that there are several big-ticket infrastructure investments in the very near term given the new government's initiative to partner with private entities. We would like to participate in a number of these privatization and infrastructure projects," Sy said.

Since the buy-in deal in UBM was finalized, Sy has committed to make an offer to buy the stakes of other shareholders in compliance with the Securities Regulation Code. This tender offer can pave the way for Sy's takeover of the majority control of the company.

Under the securities law, a group acquiring 35 percent or more of a publicly listed company must offer to buy out all other shareholders at the same price.

UBM is an investment holding company incorporated in 1975 and listed on the stock exchange in May 1972.

Tender offer set for Sept. 6 to Oct. 5

Globe eyes growth in Q3

By Paolo S. Montecillo

PALA-LED Globe Telecom Inc. may post better earnings in the third quarter of the year as its several new promotions make the company's services more attractive on a bigger base of subscribers.

Globe president and CEO Ernest Cu said the trend in the last two months had been better for the company than the first half of the year, when the company's earnings dipped by 30 percent.

But Globe continues to perform below last year's standards in line with the decline across the entire industry, Cu said.

"Revenues have picked up. Our new offers are really strong," Cu said. "It's been trending better than the first half," he told reporters at the sidelines of General Ballengo Builders Night last Wednesday.

Globe has been a long-time supporter of General Ballengo, the advocacy group, headed by Cooplan Est Chairt member Tony Meloto, which builds shelters for the homeless.

Cu said its joint-offers that allowed people to send texts to other subscribers outside the Globe network for a fixed price had been popular among users.

Revenues have been better despite the third quarter usually being a lean season for local phone firms.

However, on a year-on-year basis, he said the company's profit was still lower.

"We all know how it is year-on-year," he said. "It's the same for the entire industry," he added.

Revenues of local telecommunication firms have been either flat or lower than year-ago levels with intensified competition pushing down profit margins.

For Globe's part, its profit fell by 30 percent to P5.3 billion in the first semester of the year. In rival, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., posted a marginal 1 percent growth to P10.3 billion in the same period—the company's slowest profit growth in over a year.

Due to its lower earnings, Globe earlier announced a cut in its capital expenditure for 2010 from the original target of P30B million.

Lower Sept. power bills seen

By Amy R. Remo

ELECTRICITY USERS in the Dandino areas of power distributor Manila Electric Co. can expect a decline in their power bills this month, following a drop in the prices of electricity that the utility gets from its independent power producers (IPPs) and the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM).

According to Meralco, IPP power rates dropped by an average of 18.20 centavos per kilowatt-hour, with Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. (QPPL) registering the biggest reduction of almost P1 per kWh.

The rates of its two other IPPs, the 1,000-megawatt Ilo Ilo and the 500-MW San Lorenzo natural gas-fired power plants, also declined by 7.23 and 6.72 centavos per kWh, respectively.

In a statement, Meralco explained that the reduction in IPP rates was largely due to the higher capacity factor for all three IPPs, resulting in lower fixed rate per kWh.

For August, the capacity factor for QPPL, Ilo Ilo and San Lorenzo reached 86 percent, 91.5 percent and 94.9 percent, respectively.

Meralco stressed that with the IPP plants reaching higher dispatch levels, power rates charged by these plants would also be lower. The IPPs have consistently been the distribution utility's cheapest source of electricity in the past four months.

In the meantime, Meralco said it also expected the WESM to finally register lower rates for August, which would impact on the consumer's September power bills.

Over the past few months, Meralco had been blaming the high prices in the WESM for the increases in its electricity bills, including that of last month, when the generation charge rose by 44 centavos per kWh to P1.0982 per kWh.

The generation charge for August was the second highest for the year and only 67 centavos lower than the peak level of P1.77 per kWh registered in April. The 44 centavo adjustment in the generation charge is also equivalent to an increase of around 4 percent from the average July 2010 Meralco bill.

The effective cost of purchases from the WESM increased to P5.05 per kWh to almost P11 per kWh in July and was reflected in the August electricity bill.

Stock options 101

IN OTHERWISE routine corporate activity, stock options have become controversial in the wake of the ongoing Senate probe on alleged excessive remuneration of officials of government-owned and controlled corporations.

Senate hearings, organized by the representatives of the Social Security System in the board of Philex Mining Corp., where the agency has invested some P1.1.3 billion, earned millions of pesos from the company's stock option plan.

The argument goes that since these directors were appointed to the board by virtue of their position in the SSS, any benefit that may arise from such membership should accrue in favor of the SSS members, not to the officials.

Used in the context of the SSS case, a stock option is the right given to a person to buy the stocks of a company at a stated price (or strike price) within a specific period.

The strike price is usually lower than the price the stocks would ordinarily fetch if purchased in the stock exchange or in any other market where they are traded.

Depending on the company's corporate strategy, the option may be given only to employees who meet certain criteria (in which case it is called employee stock option plan), or limited to the directors and executives (or executive stock option plan), or to the entire work complement without distinction.

Benefits

The employee or executive who avails himself of the option can keep the stocks for investment purposes, i.e., let their value appreciate through the years and be content with the dividends the company may declare from time to time depending on its financial conditions.

If the option is exercised for "speculative" purposes, he may wait for the price to go up and, when his targeted selling price is reached, unload the shares.

The difference between the strike price and the selling price represents his profit.

Stock option plans have two objectives. First, to give the recipient employees or executives a sense of ownership in the company. By being part owner, they would be encouraged to work for its continued profitability. It's a play on the basic human principle of self-interest—a person will go to all lengths to protect, preserve and promote anything that will benefit him.

Second, the plan is aimed at giving its recipients the opportunity to earn additional income, either in the form of cash dividends or, in case they decide to trade it, by way of profits earned from the trade.

That extra money will not entail additional cost to the company because it represents a return on investments made on the stocks acquired under the plan.

Price decrease

There is no sure pace, however, that the price of stocks acquired through the plan, will go up; it may not move for a long time or, worse, plunge if the company fails to meet its projections.

The stipulation or lots in price periods may be a cause for concern for those who avail of the plan for investment purposes. Historically, the value of the stocks of fairly managed corporations tends to appreciate in the long run.

It's those who buy for speculative purposes who would have sleepless nights to see the stocks lose their attraction in the market. If they lose further price deterioration, they might be compelled to sell to minimize their losses; or hold on to their stock and hope for better times.

Aside from this downside, there are certain aspects of stock option plans that may have adverse effects on the company and its stockholders.

When the option is exercised, the company is obliged to issue such number of shares needed to meet the demand.

Those stocks would have to come either from the authorized but unissued shares, or, as in recent years, from new shares that the company will create for that purpose. The increase will invariably affect the percentage of stock ownership of existing stockholders.

If, for example, a stockholder owns 10 percent of the company's stocks at the time the option became effective and new shares are created to meet the enrollment, the ownership percentage of that stockholder is correspondingly reduced by the number of newly issued shares.

Strength

Aside from the dimension of the voting strength, the entry of new stock holders will bring about changes in the relationship structure within the company.

In closely-held corporations, the introduction of new faces in the board or to the stockholder line-up can disrupt long standing traditions, as result in adjustments that the old guards may not be happy about.

On the other hand, stock option plans represent lost revenue for the company.

If the "cheaply" priced stocks were sold at the stock exchange or other capital market, they would attract a price higher than the strike price.

Proponents of stock options counter that such paper bid-ask represents additional revenue that the company can use to meet its operational requirements, or, combined with other earnings, be the source of dividends for the stockholders.

There are pros and cons to stock options plans. The directors have to find a balance between the interests of existing stockholders and the intended beneficiaries of the plan.

(For feedback, please write to capt.abrio@inquirer.com.ph.)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
Municipality of Tigbao
Tigbao

Agrarian Reform Communities Project 2 (ARCP 2)
ADB Loan No. 3485 & PHI-OFID Loan No. 1057P

INVITATION TO BID

REHABILITATION/IMPROVEMENT OF LIMAS GUINLIN FARM TO-MARKET ROAD GUINLIN, TIGBAO, ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR

The Municipality of Tigbao now invites bids for Construction of 1.2+km. Limas Guinlin Farm to market road, under contract no. ARCP 2-ZDS-WRKS-01 (RI-ZDS-WRKS-01). Completion of the Works is required within 180 calendar days from the date of the effective start of the contract/s. Bidders should have completed in the past two (2) years a contract/s that are similar to the work/s that are to be undertaken under the Contract that is the subject of this bid invitation. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II. Instructions to Bidders.

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): P1,150,000.00
Project Duration: 180 calendar days
Minimum Bid Security Bonds from: 2% (P23,000.00)
Cash Bond: P46,000.00
Bid Closing Date: 26 Oct '17 Time: 10:00 AM

Composition of Works

Items and Works	Scope of Work	Quantities	Unit
1 Unclassified Excavation			
A	Earthworks		
101	Roadway Excavation	3,027.00	Cu.m
102	Structural Excavation	450.00	Cu.m
104	Embankment from Excavated Materials	1,350.00	Cu.m
105	Subgrade Preparation	11,400.00	Sq.m
B	Surface Course		
200	Aggregate Surface Course	3,000.00	Cu.m
201	Aggregate Subbase Course	1,350.00	Cu.m
C	Drainage & Slope Protection Works		
308 (a)	Concrete Box Culvert	30.00	Cu.m
308 (b)	Reinforced Concrete Pipe (with 300 Diameter)	24.00	Cu.m
309 (c)	Stone Masonry (with mortar)	247.00	Cu.m
D	Miscellaneous Works (Civil Road Signage, Guardrail, Etc.)		
800	Guardrail (Steel Beam)	18.00.00	Sqs.
807	Concrete Markings	200.00	Cu.m

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with Republic Competitive procedures, and is open to bidders from a pre-qualified eligible contractors of the Asian Development Bank.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Municipality of Tigbao, Province of Zamboanga del Sur and inspect the Bidding Documents on September 1, 2017 at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on September 1, 2017 from the address below upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of PhP5,000.00.

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Government Philippines Procurement System provided that bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bid/s.

The Municipality of Tigbao reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect therein, and accept the bid/s it considers most advantageous to the Municipality of Tigbao.

Bids will be opened at the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted. The deadline for the submission of bids must not be later than 10:00a.m. September 25, 2017. The opening of bids will proceed immediately after the time set for the deadline of submission of bids as indicated above.

The Municipality of Tigbao reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders. The submission of bids is not an obligation of the Bidding Documents.

For further information, please refer to:

(Sgd.) ALEX T. EDAJOTOR
ARCP/Municipal Mayor (Chairperson)

ITB: September 1, 2017

Local stocks to hit all-time highs, says FMIC-UA&P

By Boots C. Durmo

PHILIPPINE STOCKS, which are now trading at 32-month highs, still have room to rise further but will likely encounter some stumbling blocks before breaking into all-time highs, according to First Metro Investment Corp.-University of Asia & the Pacific.

"The bullish conditions continue to be positive as the bulls put on an impressive display in the PSEi," said FMIC-UA&P in their latest monthly research.

But the report said pullbacks would likely occur before the index sets higher highs. The local index hit a record of 8,875.56 on Oct. 31, 2007.

"Any consolidation will be constructive as it will allow the PSEi to breathe and sustain the upside trajectory. Investors should take advantage of dips rather than be selling-caught," the report said.

The main risk to watch out for, the report said, would be if and when the PSEi neared its prior historical 52-week.

"So far, odds of it happening are slim, unless negative developments abroad overwhelm local sentiments," the report said.

Over the near term, the report said the week ended 8 September could see investors to buy into emerging market lots.

"Strong macroeconomic fundamentals coupled with the robust first half corporate profits will maintain a favorable foundation for the Philippine equities market," the report said.

But as the local market cannot get away from the headwinds overseas, FMIC-UA&P said investors should remain cautious as fears of declining global growth outstrip that of inflation.

Over the long term, FMIC-UA&P said positive earnings of local corporations would likely continue to keep the local bourse buoyant.

Moreover, the economic and political policies of the new Philippine president may further increase investors' risk appetite as his first State of the Nation Address kicked off greater optimism in both the equities and bond markets," the report said.

Sugar output seen down by 5%

Dry spell may adversely affect plantations

THE PHILIPPINES expects its sugar output to drop in the crop year that just started as dry weather adversely affected sugarcane farms.

Sugar Regulatory Administration Administrator Ma. Regina Bustos-Montinola said.

The recent drought affected sugarcane plantations, Montinola said at the sidelines of the turnover ceremony at the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA).

Bustos-Montinola, whom Malacañang replaced last month, said some new plantings were just starting to mature, hampered by lack of moisture.

Philippine Sugar Millers Association executive director Ardinduque Asiaten said said the 1.87 million tons output projection was still preliminary.

Despite the anticipated decline in production, the SRA has not made any plan on raw sugar importation.

"The Philippine sugar supply is okay for now," Montinola said.

One or two million may start rolling this week, she said. Milling is expected to peak around November. The global marketing year starts in October, and sugar supply is expected to ease toward the end of 2010.

In the meantime, the Philippines is set to complete 300,000 tons in imports in mid-September. This, Inings said. Philippine sugar importsin 250,000 tons for 2010.

Sugar prices are expected to remain stable at the current suggested retail price (SRP) of P56 per kilo.

Montinola said that about two weeks ago, the National Price Coordinating Council raised the SRP for sugar to P56 from P52 per kilo to reflect the tight sugar supply situation at the end of the 2009-2010 crop year.

Det Martin said the SRA-Soto was already on 2015, when member nations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations setup import tariffs on sugar.

She said the SRA was aiming at helping the industry improve efficiency, productivity and competitiveness ahead of trade liberalization.

The Philippines returned to be sugar importer market this year for the first time since 2001. The country's private traders imported a combined 350,000 tons in the first half and ordered another 100,000 tons recently.

Sugar prices doubled last year and went up to a 22-year high of more than P2,300 per 50-kilogram bag early this year. This, as weather disruptions affected harvests in Brazil and India, the world's biggest producers. Rhae T. Ochoa

GMA Network ratings improve, survey shows

By Paolo D. Montecillo

LISTED TELEVISION station GMA Network Inc. widened its ratings lead in August over rival ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. in the viewer-rich Metro Manila area, the latest Nielsen TV Audience Measurement survey showed.

Based on data for total day ratings, or from 6 a.m. to 12 midnight for the month, the survey showed GMA registered a 6.7 point lead in audience share, with 27.8 percent versus its rival's 21.2 percent.

The lead of more than six share points grew from the 5.6 point margin recorded in July.

"Mega Manila, an acknowledged bailiwick of GMA since 2003, comprises 12 percent of total urban television household nationwide," the company said in a statement.

GMA Network also said 38 of its shows occupied the list of 50 most-watched programs on television in Metro Manila for the month.

In urban Luzon, where 77 percent of total urban television households nationwide are found, GMA also managed to keep its edge over competition. In audience share, GMA boasted a 2.5 point lead with 36.6 percent to ABS-CBN's 34.1 percent.

The lead was up from the margin recorded in July, which was at 0.4 point. In channel ratings, the lead grew from 0.1 point in July to 0.5 in August.

The company said 16 of the overall top 20 programs in Urban Luzon were from GMA.

The company also gained ground in nationwide ratings, where ABS-CBN has been a perennial leader. Based on the National Urban Television Audience Measurement, GMA amassed ABS-CBN's lead in audience shares from 0.2 percentage points the previous month to 0.4 points in August.

GMA's profit dipped 3 percent year-on-year in the second quarter amid a slight dip in ratings that drew some advertisers to other networks.

Despite this, the company remains confident of meeting its profit goal of a healthy growth in its bottom line by the end of the year, thanks largely to a windfall from political campaign advertisements earlier in the year.

NGCP projects worth P5B OKd

By Amy R. Borres

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has allowed National Grid Corp. of the Philippines to proceed with its P5.14 billion worth of capital projects, which were meant to ensure the quality, reliability and security of power supply.

In four separate orders, the ERC approved the Tuguegarao-New Mobitan 230-kilovolt transmission line upgrading project; Northeastern transmission development project; Tayabas substation expansion project 1, and the New Antipolo 230kv substation project.

Based on the ERC filings, the Tuguegarao-New Mobitan project, which is expected to cost P2.075 billion, would involve the construction of a new double circuit transmission line, expansion of substations and installation of protection, control and communication equipments.

This project is intended to increase the existing line's transmission to accommodate the full dispatch of existing base load power plants and the commissioning of future power generation projects in Isnob's canton.

The P226-million Northeastern transmission development project involved the the installation of 50-Kv capacitor bank at Magapit load end substation in Cagayan.

In the meantime, the P1.11 billion Tayabas substation expansion project calls for the installation of 600-megavolt-ampere transformer protection.

The P1.79 billion New Antipolo 230kv substation will be construction to serve the existing increase in load in Metro Manila.

These four projects are among the priority transmission projects lined up by NGCP.

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Dyna Bolt Eye Pin • Self Drilling Head In
• Asbestos Gasket Sheets, Kimpo, Tuscol • Expansion Shield
• Stainless Steel Fasteners, Ring Gasket • TOOLS Rubber connector
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Sub-Portfolios of Variable Life Insurance Contracts
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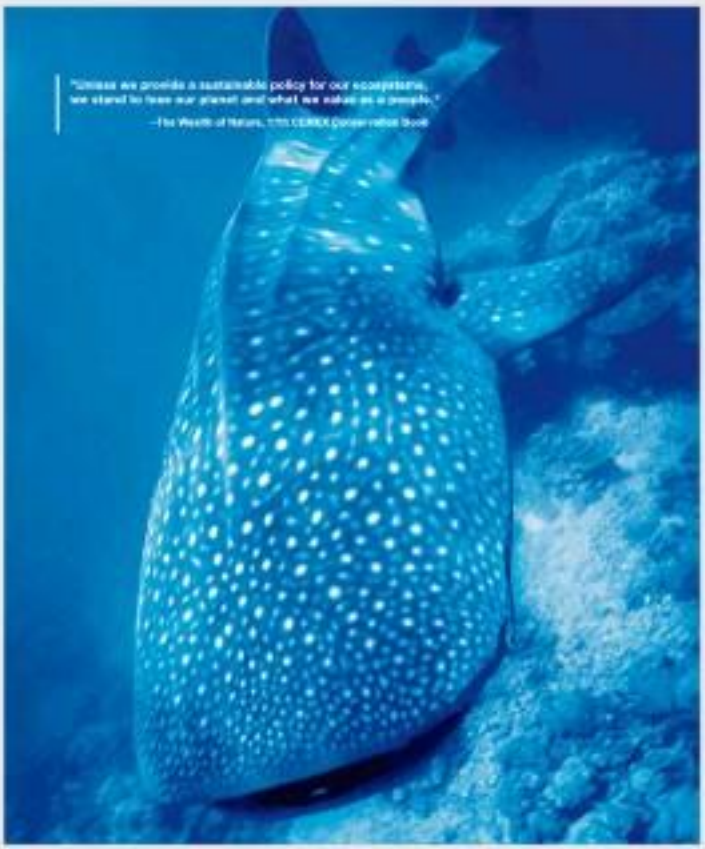
Growth Fund - Peso 2.35477 2.35500
Equity Fund - Peso 1.65154 1.65161
Bond Fund - US Dollar 1.09040 1.09080
Balanced Select Fund 1 1.01465 1.01500
Balanced Select Fund 2 1.10901 1.10930
Protection Fund - Peso 1.00005 1.00170
Money Market Fund - Peso 1.00000 1.00000



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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP'S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits.

Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign Nationals / Citizenship	Position
CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY, INC. Unit 1-A East Tower, Philippine Stock Exchange, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	James Ho Chinese	IT Consultant
MC DONNELL DOWELL PHILIPPINES, INC. L2 HDL Tower Commercial Ave. Metropolitan Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Rodney John Frank Turner Australian	Supervisor
NOVASIDE CORPORATION (NP 01000) Plaza Fatimagrid Tower, 69 Esperanza St., Makati City	See Kiu Wong Malaysian	Head of Business Development
BOSCHMA (PD) SOLUTIONS, INC. (NP 01000) Plaza Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Kyle Matthew Pittsford Canadian	Production Support Head
SHIPYARD INDUSTRIAL FURNISHING, INC. Blk 37, University Park, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City	Jit Mook Ong Australian	Supply Teacher
LG ELECTRONICS (CENTER) (LGEAI), INC. 28 Multinational Dormitory Road, Mahogany, Muntinlupa City	Jae Whan Kim Korean	Assistant Supervisor
LEAD FOR DIRECT, INC. G/F MFM Corporate Center, Pioneer cor. Shaw Blvd. Site, Mandaluyong City	Vinod Kumar Dixit Indian	Information Technology Consultant
HOSEO CORP., INC. Blk 6 Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Tae Hyung Kim Korean	Team Lead
PATMA TRADING CORP. 14-B Encarnacion St. Caldecon, Legaspi Village, Makati City	Ashish Arora Indian	Finance Manager
PATMA TRADING CORP. 14-B Encarnacion St. Caldecon, Legaspi Village, Makati City	Mangesh Kaun Indian	Sales Manager
ROBERT BOSCH INC. (NP Prof'l Legend Tower), Sandhill, cor. 31st St. Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City	Jerry Dalle Filipino	Purchasing Manager (UNIBEC)
CHINA BANKING CORPORATION (NP 01000) Makati Ave. cor. Ayala Ave., Makati City	Jiangsu Liu Chinese	Statistic / Filer Manager
GLOBAL METRO V INCORPORATED Unit 204 3/F CLC Bldg., Calle Industria, Bagumbayan, Quezon City	Hemant Madhavan Indian	Area Manager
SMART TELECOMMUNICATIONS PHILS., INC. 16/F Cyberpark 3, Pioneer St., Mandaluyong City	Wan Nadiri Mohsen Frey German	Senior Technical Advisor II, Head of Network Operations Access & Transmission
TRANSCOM WORLDWIDE (PHILIPPINES), INC. Transcom Corporate Bldg., Lee Hauton Road Frontera Verde Compound, Pasig City	Salvador Rodriguez Cabal Spanish	Business Process Manager
NOMURA (U.A.) INTEGRATED RESEARCH (PH) INC. 5/F Zeta Nine Building, 207 Sct Rizal Ave., Makati City	Jarvis Williams Australia	Area Head Manager
UNIVERSAL TRADING CORP. 2702 Locsin St., Makati Ave., Makati Manila	Gurdeep Singh Indian	Assistant Manager
W YOUNG TRADING INC. Unit 2-7 Prestige Heights, Legaspi Village, Makati City	Myoung Gyu Kim Korean	General Manager
COCA-COLA BOTTLERS PHILIPPINES, INC. SLEX Plaza Compound 1 Brgy., 1129 Canlubang Area, Laguna	Jose Roberto Maldonado Mexican	Region Sales & Commercial Director - CBA
NAKAMURA ENGINEERING PHILIPPINES INC. 3/F Tesoro Bldg., 67 Tordesillas Road, Quezon City	Kunimasu Kobayashi Japanese	Supply Division Manager & Technical Advisor for After Sales Service
INFOSYS BPO LIMITED PHILIPPINE BRANCH UP Town Park, Mindanao Avenue, Bo Bonifacio, Taguig City	Sharad Chaudhary Indian	Principal Consultant - Solutions Design
TELETECH CUSTOMER CARE MANAGEMENT PHILIPPINES, INC. Building 7, Ecs Compound Office, 7000 Bay Blvd., Mid Cyberpark Avenue, Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga	Alan Pin Gan Malaysian	Senior Consultant, Human Capital and Talent Acquisition

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

BUMBUNG G. ABRAHAM
Regional Director

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PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC-EC), through its 2010 Corporate Budget intends to apply the sum of Six Million Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php6,250,000.00) inclusive of all applicable taxes, being the approved Budgetary for the contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply and Delivery of One (1) Lot 2010 Helicopter Insurance Coverage** (Hereinafter referred to as "Project") PNOC-EC now invites bids for the Project. Interested Philippine Performance Bonds, Warehouse Receipts, Bank Guarantees, Letters of Credit and other acceptable forms.

PNOC Exploration Corporation now invites sealed bids for the Supply and Delivery of One (1) Lot (2010 Helicopter Insurance Coverage) Public Bidding. Delivery of the Goods should be within Thirty (30) calendar days from the issuance of the Purchase Order. Bidders should have completed, within the last three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and/or entities or associations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from PNOC EC's Procurement Section on the 4th/F. Rotunda and inspect the Bidding Documents at the above address on or before the 15th/F. Rotunda and inspect the Bidding Documents at the above address on or before the Managers Project Development Department, Energy Development Corporation Building, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, which shall be open to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

Bidders may opt to submit their bids in the above address on or before **September 15, 2010** and latest **9:00 AM (PHST)** (EC Lobby and clock time). Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the above address. Late bids shall be rejected.

PNOC-EC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For more information, please visit our website at www.pnoc.ec.ph and/or the PHILGEPS website at www.philgeps.net

(signature)
Atty. Jose Arbalonia
Bids and Awards Committee

(PN-Sept 3) (1x1)

PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID (RE-BID)

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC), through its 2010 Corporate Budget intends to apply the sum of Thirty Six Million Five Hundred Ninety Five Thousand Pesos (Php36,595,000.00) inclusive of all applicable taxes, being the approved Budgetary for the contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Engagement of Services for PNOC EC's Integrated Libir Septic 2D 3D Wire Production**. Bidders should have completed a similar contract to the Project, within five (5) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and/or entities or associations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from PNOC EC's Procurement Section on the 4th/F. Rotunda and inspect the Bidding Documents at the above address on or before the Managers Project Development Department, Energy Development Corporation Building, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, which shall be open to all interested parties who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders starting September 3, 2010 from the address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php2,500.00).

PNOC-EC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For more information, please visit our website at www.pnoc.ec.ph and/or the PHILGEPS website at www.philgeps.net

(signature)
Atty. Jose Arbalonia
Bids and Awards Committee

(PN-Sept 3) (1x1)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

LGU Mataasnakahoy, Batangas

Name of Project	Updating/Preparation of Comprehensive Land Use & Development Plan of Mataasnakahoy CY 20 10 2020
Brief Description	Consulting Services for Updating/Preparation of Comprehensive Land Use & Development Plan of Mataasnakahoy CY 20 10 2020
Approved Budget for the Contract	Php2,500,000.00
Source of Funding	20% Municipal Development Fund
Implementing Agency	Sto Nino Municipality

1. Submission of letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility	September 3, to 17, 2010
2. Assessment of Eligibility Papers	September 3 to 17, 2010
3. Submission of Eligibility Requirements	September 3 to 17, 2010
4. Deadline of Eligibility Check	September 17, 2010
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	September 18, 2010
6. Deadline of Bid Documents	September 30, 2010
7. Pre-bid Conference	September 30, 2010

September 30, 2010
Contact Person
Contact Nos.

Atty. Lorelie Josephine B. Rico – BAC Secretariat
(043) 407-0825 – Telefax No. (043) 754-1016

(PN-September 3, 2010)

More Classifieds

DOLE Region IV
A16
Gulf United Corp.
A16
Dep'Ed Division of Cagayan
B3
Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital
B3
Province of Zamboanga del Sur
B8

OBITUARIES

JOVEN DE LEON STA. ANA

of Sta. Elena, Marikina City
born June 02, 1942

peacefully joined his Creator on September 01, 2010 at the age of 68.

His remains lie in state at his residence at 22 M. Roxas St., Vista Valley Executive Village, Sto. Nino, Marikina City.

Interment will be on Sunday, September 05, 2010 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Fatima Chapel, Vista Valley Executive Village, Marikina City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Cecilia "Cel" C. Petisme

wish to convey our deepest appreciation to all of you, our relatives and friends, who sent flowers, sent cards, gave donations, or in some other way expressed your love, concern and support in our day of Dol while home to her Creator.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
- 2 Timothy 4:7

Talks on for Jakarta, Bangkok flights to Clark

Air Asia's Tony Fernandes checks out airport in Clark

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer General Assignment

CLARK, PAMPANGA—The founders of Air Asia, regarded as Asia's largest budget airline, visited the Clarkdale Diosdado Macapagal International Airport here on Wednesday to bargain talks on starting flights from Jakarta and Bangkok to Clark.

"Our Thailand and Indonesian teams are here to look at whether to make flights from Jakarta and Bangkok into Clark. We are big believers of Clark. Many are still looking at Clark. Many are still not find this is the right place to be," Tony Fernandes, Air Asia chief executive officer, told reporters at DMIA.

Fernandes said the operations of the company have started in 2005 "have been very successful and it now makes 116 flights a week to and from Kuala Lumpur and Siem Riendabu.

He favored an open door policy to lease for Clark.

"Our whole life has been about liberalization and opening up," he said.

"I think the Philippines should be one of the larger countries for tourism in South east Asia. But DC has been restricted because of the circumscription of access). So, I think it's great for your country for tourism and obviously we at Air Asia would love it because it would not be just about flying to Clark, Zamboanga. There are tons of places. We are good at developing new areas," Fernandes said.

Air Asia, he said, prefers to fly to Clark because DMIA charges reasonable parking rates and other fees.

"There's also less of hassle [here]. We believe Clark should be a low-cost terminal here someday," he said.

Fernandes and Ramundas Menassat began Air Asia nine years ago.

It has been serving 30 million passengers annually from only 200,000 passengers when it started.

Mayor Jose Lazatin, president and chief executive officer of state-owned Clark International Airport Corp., said the visit of Air Asia's two top executives was a "sure and strong sign of confidence in Clark."

"They was very happy to see the progress since his first visit four years ago to meet the Clark-Kuala Lumpur flights. With Air Asia setting up base in Thailand then Indonesia, the Philippines could be its third southeast base. That will boost the local economy and the position of Clark as the gateway airport of the country," Lazatin said.

United Parcel Services (UPS) made its maiden flight to Clark in 2002. It has maintained its inter-Asia hub at the DMIA since then.

Korea's Asiana Airlines now makes 11 flights a week into Clark.

International and domestic flights to and from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Metro Manila are diverted to the DMIA during bad weather and when technical problems crop up at the country's premier gateway.

P-Noy's stand on smuggling

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

IN HIS State of the Nation Address last July 26, President Aquino identified smuggling as one of the key issues he would address.

That is most appropriate since the Arroyo administration left behind the worst fiscal deficit in the country's history. The budget deficit in 2009 stood at P298 billion—a deterioration by 135 percent from the 2008 level. What is worse, the ensuing deficit of P325 billion as of July 2010 is a 22-percent increase over the same period in 2009.

Smuggling has been estimated to cost our government more than P100 billion in lost revenue. Plugging this loophole will significantly reduce our deficit, save jobs, and protect our consumers from sub-standard smuggled products that do not meet safety requirements.

Onion smuggling

How has Mr. Aquino's drive against onion smuggling fared so far?

As stated in an earlier commentary, onion smuggling usually occurs between June and September. But this year, it started in August.

The onion smugglers probably were fearful that the President would act decisively on smuggling. Thus, they did not move in June and July.

However, in the first week of August, they ratted the government's resolve and smuggled onions into Divisoria.

On Aug. 9, the leaders of Kasama Onion Growers and Alyansa Agrikultura took pictures and purchased smuggled onions in Divisoria. They then presented the evidence to Customs Commissioner Angelito Alvarez.

The ex-warehouse price of domestic onions dropped by 35 percent from P700 to P450 a bag, then causing a large drop in the farmers' already meager income. After a long wait of 19 days, the Bureau of Customs and the Department of Agriculture finally conducted an anti-smuggling raid in Divisoria. Unfortunately, the raid was badly botched.

Most farmers believe that the raid failed because it was meant to, not because of incompetence on the part of authorities. The farmers cited the following reasons for thinking this way:

- The late arrival of BOC and BA personnel.
- The refusal of BOC personnel to implement an agreement between farmers and the Customs chief regarding the confiscation of smuggled onions; and,
- The sudden disappearance of smuggled onions from coolers that had been sealing the product that same morning.

Support from the top

Commissioner Alvarez and Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala fully support President Aquino's anti-smuggling agenda, having acted swiftly on the farmers' request.

Alvarez immediately assigned a person to be the point man in the fight against onion smuggling, while Alcala sent his assistant secretary to help out in the raid.

Unfortunately, the subordinates botched the raid.

On Aug. 26, when we met Commissioner Alvarez, he said the next raid would not fail.

The farmers suggested that they would do their share in the surveillance of smuggled onions.

The farmers disputed the report of some BOC personnel, who had earlier said there were no smuggled onions.

In addition, the Customs point man, who had delegated supervision of the previous raid to another official, would now personally oversee the next raid.

Alvarez also gave his word to carry out what the former Customs commissioner infamously do—act on all of the 50 onion shipments that arrived without import permits last year.

New paradigm

We had hoped for a significant improvement in the anti-smuggling drive of the new government, especially since it was a priority item on the President's agenda. But the recently botched raid on smuggled onions revealed that the Customs and Agriculture officials were not closely supervised.

Albert Binondo once said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, and expecting different results."

We must do things differently this time around if we expect to successfully curb smuggling.

We must take advantage of the political will shown by Alvarez and Alcala by implementing a new paradigm. Unlike before, the BOC must work in partnership with the BA to conduct an aggressive anti-smuggling campaign.

Having the previous administration, a BA official once told me, "fighting smuggling is the job of BOC, not BA." That attitude is the agriculture department must change.

The new BA and BOC leadership should now work as a team, with the farmers fully supporting them. Most importantly, they should supervise the anti-smuggling operations from the top to the lowest levels so that their plans would not be sabotaged.

Only in this way will the President's anti-smuggling effort gain ground.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, former secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, rural trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agriwatch_phil@yahoo.com or telefax (02) 8522112.)

Filinvest eyes more projects in Cebu

By Regina T. Aguilar
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Filinvest Land Inc. (FLI) plans to roll out more real estate development projects in Cebu, FLI chair emeritus Andrew Tan Cognangco said during the launching of its latest project in this city.

The FLI-launched last week what the company called as its "biggest homecoming" project in the province, called Citta Di Mare.

"We will have more investment(s) in Cebu," Cognangco said the buyers.

He cited Cebu as one of the most ideal destinations for its real estate in the country.

"Cebu will definitely continue to grow in importance," Cognangco said.

FLI first vice president Victor Luc Macias confirmed to the business that the company was counting for new business in Cebu for future projects, which include a luxury private community building, hotel and subdivisions.

"We target to launch any one of these projects in the forthcoming year. Hopefully, we can finally secure a location before the year ends," said Luc Macias.

The Cognangco patriarch wants his sons and humble beginnings in Cebu.

"Citta Di Mare is our biggest homecoming in Cebu. This project is another chance for me to come home," said Cognangco.

Citta Di Mare, which is Italian for "City by the Sea," is a 16.6-hectare seaside residential project set in the 10-hectare South Road Properties owned by the Cebu City government.

The Italian-inspired seaside community is designed with spacious residential cluster and waterfront commercial and lifestyle strip.

The first phase of the project will break ground in December.

Cognangco said he put up his first residential project in Cebu, now called the San Miguel Subdivision in Basak (village) Banilad, Cebu City.

Today, FLI's projects in Cebu include the Grand Centa Residences in Cebu City, Seascapes Resort Town in Lapu-Lapu City and One Oasis Condo Compound in Cebu City.

It also developed the 46-hectare Bel subdivision in Lapu-Lapu City and the Crown-Del Mar subdivision in Talisay City.

"Cebu is very close to me. My family traces its roots to this place, where my parents earned a living as traders. Cebu was my training ground, where I've developed my acumen for business. Cebu is a special place for me and it will always be my home," Cognangco said.

US manufacturing . . .

From page B12

only 43,000 private-sector jobs, which would mark the fourth straight disappointing month.

Wednesday's report suggests that moderate growth in manufacturing will continue, said Reuben Gee, the chair of the survey.

However, a measure of new orders, which are a gauge of future business, dipped to the lowest level since June 2009 after surging earlier this year. That slowdown is consistent with the more moderate pace of growth in the United States, Europe and China that is expected in the second half of the year, said TD Economics analyst Sheila Wheatridge in a research note. AP

BUSINESS

US fears mean risk for Europe

LONDON—Indonesia are pointing up to the European Central Bank, which may be about to raise its 2010 economic projections. But that brightening picture is being increasingly darkened by fears about the recovery in the United States.

That is why ECB head Jean-Claude Trichet is expected to signal that it's no time to discuss interest rate hikes.

The worry is that the loss of momentum in the United States, the world's largest economy, will have a knock-on impact in the 16 countries that use the euro, where a bigger-than-anticipated economic rebound has been largely led by a recovery in global demand.

If US demand for German cars wanes, for example, growth in Europe could falter too.

"Trichet may again note still firm short-term macrodynamics in the eurozone, but at the same time acknowledge risks from the downturn in the United States and Asia and that the cyclical upswing will likely remain fragile and uneven," said Silvia Ardagna, European economist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

The ECB, which next month starts policy for the eurozone, is expected to keep its main interest rate at the record low of 1 percent—and not to change the remaining special liquidity arrangements for the banks introduced at the height of the financial crisis. AP

US manufacturing lifts economy

Chinese sector also expands

WASHINGTON—Manufacturing is growing in the United States and abroad, easing fears that the economy might be on the verge of a second recession.

The US sector expanded for a 13th straight month in August, extending solid gains in Chinese manufacturing and auto sales.

The news gave Wall Street a boost, with investors overlooking dismal reports on US auto sales and construction spending. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 2.5 percent.

China's robust growth raises hopes that it will step up its consumption of US exports and help sustain the US economic recovery.

The Institute for Supply Management said Wednesday that its manufacturing index rose to 56.3 in August from 55.3 in July. A reading above 50 indicates growth. The trade group's index has surged since last 2008 and hit a six-year high in April.

US factories have seen rising demand for exports and from businesses that are investing in capital equipment and supplies. That has given the economy a lift at a time of uncertainty for the recovery.

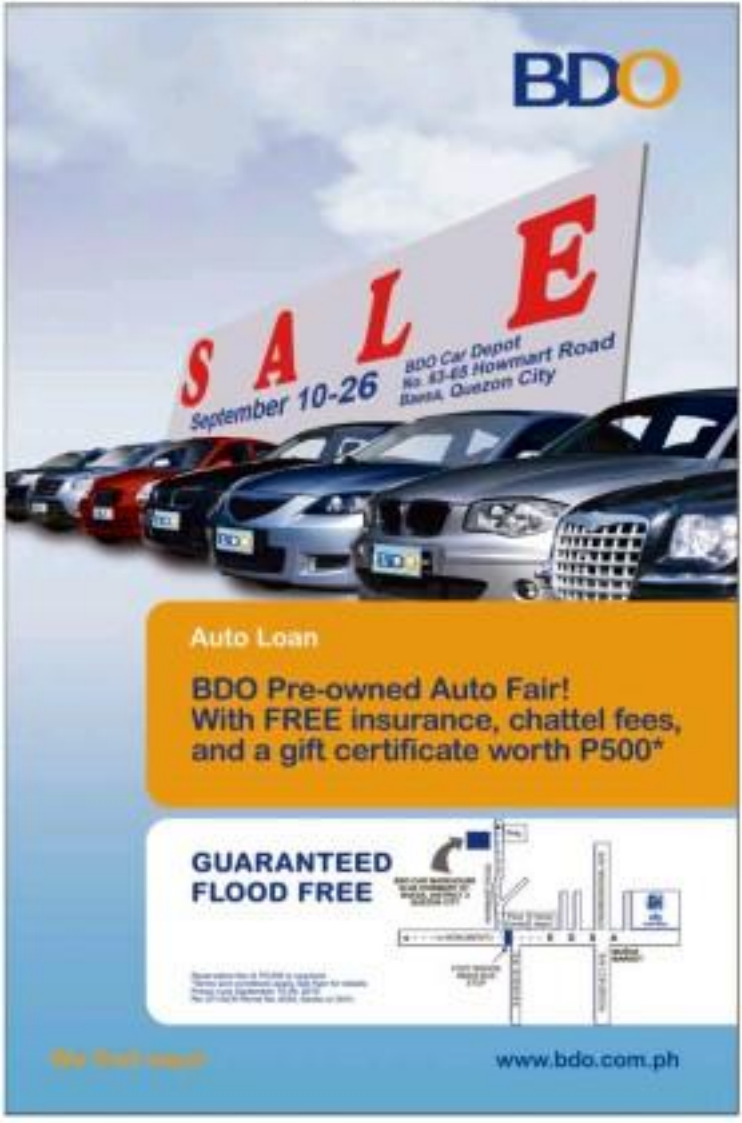
Jobs are scarce, the unemployment rate is near double digits, home sales are at the lowest level in 15 years, and the American consumer is not spending enough to give businesses confidence to hire.

CLOSING BELL Rare (left) auditor husband Richard Rare (center) applaud the closing bell on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Wednesday. Markets rebounded 3 percent to open the month of September, as positive manufacturing data buoyed major stock indices. AP

Construction activity dropped 1 percent in July, the third straight monthly decline, the Commerce Department said. Government revisions showed much weaker activity than previously reported for May and June.

The government is expected to report today that the economy added a net total of

US MANUFACTURING B-3



Asia stocks gain; US data soothe fears

TOKYO—Asian stocks hit a two-week high, with Japan's Nikkei briefly rising more than 2 percent, as strong US manufacturing data further soothed worries about the global economy.

But gains in Asian stocks, which were also boosted by strong tech shares, appeared capped by weakness about whether the global economy is truly on the path to recovery, as well as concern about closely watched US non-farm payrolls data on Friday.

"We're getting a lot of quick, knee-jerk reactions in both directions, up and down. These disparate pieces of economic data are being reacted to but the information is by no means clear," said Angus Gluskie, portfolio manager at White Funds Management in Australia. "We've got the potential for markets to pick up strongly into the end of the year, but we may well have to go through a few more market reactions in between first."

The MSCI index of Asia Pacific stocks outside Japan gained gains to 0.7 percent at the earlier rising to its highest level since mid-August.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei rose more than 2 percent at one point, moving further away from a 10-month low hit on Wednesday, helped by short-term market players amid near buying by domestic institutional investors as fears and buying of futures by foreign players.

But the Nikkei pared gains to 1.3 percent. It lost 7.3 percent in August and is down roughly 14 percent on the year.

Broad shares rose 0.6 percent, led by tech stocks. Reuters

Apple unveils latest iPods

SAN FRANCISCO—Apple Inc. CEO Steve Jobs announced a new line of iPods on Wednesday, including a Nano model that has a touch screen and lacks buttons.

Like previous versions, the Nano has a built-in FM tuner and can display photos. But instead of buttons, controls for playing, pausing and selecting music are right on the screen.

It will cost $149 for the 8 gigabyte version and $179 for 16 gigabytes.

In a refresh to the iPod Touch, Apple is adding video chat features similar to the newest iPhone.

It has a front-facing camera for conducting video chats with other iPod Touch and iPhone users over Wi-Fi using Apple's FaceTime program. A camera on the back can be used for taking snapshots and recording video. Prices range from $229 to $319.

Jobs also introduced a new iPod Shuffle, the lowest-end music player in Apple's line. Like the past generation, it can speak the names of playlists and songs.

But unlike the most recent of the tiny music players, the new $49 device brings back the square shape and buttons of Apple's second-generation Shuffle.

Apple, meanwhile, is adding social features to its iTunes software. Jobs said iTunes 10 brings new ways for people to learn what their friends are listening to. The feature, called Ping, is likely based on the technology Apple acquired with the purchase of Lala.com last year. AP

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

Contributing Editors Joeni Epperson and Ria Francisco-Prieto

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Tell us your feedback: respond to the message in 4427

Furne One, first Pinoy designer at London Fashion Week, comes home

FURNE One

His gowns for Arab royalty may be disparaged as 'too Dubai.' But no apologies: Supermodel Heidi Klum wears him

By Cinchie V. Mural

FURNE ONE HAS BEEN working in Dubai for 12 years now. Asked to describe his work, he replied that he designs "Cheiremax items."

He said this with a straight face, not a hint of irony in his voice. Everyone laughed. the designer included.

One was obviously referring to the over-the-top designs that his clientele in Dubai—women with plenty of money from black gold to splurge—crave for.

The reply showed One's attitude toward his work in all-rich United Arab Emirates. He shrugged when asked if it stings when Middle East-based designers like him are boxed in a stereotype, their work often described disparagingly as "too Dubai."

"I don't mind," he said. "At least there's still a group of people who want couture. Kaysi satisfiers kip-ong (chic)."

One was on a brief visit recently, one of the few times he comes home. This time he had a bigger purpose: The Cebu-born designer is homecoming queen in October, with his first gala show in the country, right after his debut at London Fashion Week this month.

The dinner show, "Point of One: A Fashion Collection by Furne One," will be held on Oct. 9 at the Shangri-La Mactan Resort and Spa in Lapu-Lapu City.

"I'm very excited. I've been preparing for this for a long time," he said. "I'm very nervous, but I'm excited at the same time."

One's gowns are known for their opulence, with lots of embellishments and luxurious fabrics. He has dressed Arab royalty, Filipino celebrities and even supermodel Heidi Klum, who wore his creations in Dubai.

Asked if he was worried that his gowns would be disparaged as "too Dubai," One said: "I'm not worried about that. I'm very proud of my work. I'm very proud of my clientele. I'm very proud of the fact that I've been able to dress Heidi Klum, Arab royalty, Filipino celebrities. I'm very proud of that."

He said he was not bothered by the fact that his clientele in Dubai are mostly Arabs. "I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Arab. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Muslim. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Middle Eastern. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Dubai. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Emirati. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Saudi. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Kuwaiti. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Qatari. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Omani. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Bahraini. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Yemeni. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Jordanian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Lebanese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Syrian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Iraqi. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Iranian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Afghan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Pakistani. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Indian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Bangladeshi. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Sri Lankan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Nepalese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Bhutanese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Maldivian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Chinese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Japanese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Korean. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Mongolian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Taiwanese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Hong Kong. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Macanese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Vietnamese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Cambodian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Laotian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Thai. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Burmese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Malaysian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Singaporean. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Indonesian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Filipino. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Australian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not New Zealander. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Papua New Guinean. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Fijian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Tongan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Samoan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Micronesian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Polynesian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Melanesian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Aboriginal. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Native American. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Canadian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not American. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Mexican. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Guatemalan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Belizean. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Salvadoran. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Honduran. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Nicaraguan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Costa Rican. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Panamanian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Colombian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Venezuelan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Guyanese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Surinamese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not French Guianese. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Ecuadorian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Peruvian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Brazilian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Bolivian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Paraguayan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Chilean. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Argentinian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Uruguayan. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Falkland Islander. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not South Georgian. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not South Sandwich Islander. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not British Antarctic Territory. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Bouvet Island. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Peter I Island. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Queen Maud Land. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Ross Dependency. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Peninsula. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Marie Byrd Land. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Ellsworth Land. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Plateau. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Shelf. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Sheet. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Stream. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Tongue. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Rise. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Dome. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Ridge. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Cap. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Field. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Sheet. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Stream. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Tongue. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Rise. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Dome. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Ridge. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Cap. I'm not bothered by that because I'm not Antarctic Ice Field.

Furne One, first Pinoy designer at London Fashion Week, comes home

From page C1

Shangri-La's Regal Ballroom, and will benefit the Philippine National Red Cross Akati Chapter and Assumption High School Batch 1981 Foundation. The Fundraiser, directed by Ariel Lozada, is co-chaired by Rajo Tinga and Tessa Weiko. (For tickets, call Maggie Cheria at 0917 8222033.)

Cebu roots

Furne One (pronounced *furn*...short for furniture—Oh! tell) was born and raised in Cebu where he studied Fine Arts. As a young designer, he trained under Pistacia, a French designer in the Manila. In 1999, when he was in his 20s, he won Mega Magazine's Young Designers Competition. Jesse Nunez, who was one of the judges, offered him a year-long apprenticeship in her New York studio. He came home later to join another fit in Japan where he bagged a generous prize.

One was already built in the big Apple studying with Parsons. Then a friend based in Dubai suggested he try his luck in the Middle East. "Unlike New York, there was less competition and big ang dowry."

It didn't take much to convince the young man. Soon enough, he was designing overlavishly for the oldest daughter of the ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed. It was a financially rewarding gig. After three years, however, the novelty had worn off, the repetitiveness of the exercise had taken its toll on the designer.

His employer was very understanding when he asked to be released from his duties, owing to do "something else." One began designing for other clients. In 2004, he launched his brand, Amato Haute Couture, crowning so the name suggests, custom-designed fashions for Dubai's elites.

"European and American designer brands—Balenciaga, Gucci, Louis Vuitton—that's for their mind, everyday wear. Absolutely," he said matter-of-factly. "So for us, we make for the parties, the gowns. When I started, 'Christmas time.' Over the top... every day is a learning process. They were grandiose. When I joined my family, that's when I get to devise. It's still grand but not, hindi basta-basta lang."

Then he added with a laugh, "But you know, the grandeur, the more money. Pag mi-yaki you see money."

There has been a slight affect of Dubai's recent financial woes on his business. One self-imitted, but not quite enough to put a damper on his spirits. Unlike before when designers could essentially name their price, their clients now work with a budget.

Dubai weddings are a big moneymaker, he said, because that's where members meet potential wives for their sons; that's where celebrities can break loose, creating the most conspicuous, often jewel-encrusted gowns.

Creative exports

"I like their culture," he said. "Being peripatetic (going simple, shaka) naman. Ito ito. It ka? Like the Japanese and Koreans (they have different fashion tastes!)... Now locals are educated abroad so they're adapted! (Examples cited: Unlike before na isalang Tabua.)"

Of late, Middle East based or trained Filipino designers have started to gain attention here. Many of them, like One, are famous overseas but are largely unknown in the Philippines. The concern is suddenly interested in its creative exports.

There's Cary Santiago, also of Cebu, who was based in Beirut but soon home a few years ago, his laser-cutting technique quickly earning nods from critics and clients alike.

Then there's Michael Cinco, originally from Samar but is also based in Dubai, who knocked local fashionistas off their earrings (one look on earring his splendid, opera-studded collection on Philippine Fashion Week.

The soft-spoken and self-effacing One himself has been dressing supermodel Heidi Klum for three seasons of "Germany's Next Top Model" and is the first Filipino designer to be invited to show at London Fashion Week this month.

Training ground

The Middle East is a good training ground, said One, because "No. 1, there we learn to cater for techniques. No. 2, the materials and fabrics are all there. If you're an artist or designer, everything is there. Plus, there's the market... I think here we lack support from government as making up training. Filipinos are good designers. We're advanced in our tastes, shishit (saying make-pick up, translation: tatas."

While there may be some competition among Filipino designers in Dubai, One feels they're on their own more versus other nationalities, like the Lebanese, whom he explained have the cultural advantage. One, who has a staff of 130, is mentoring five Filipino design assistants in Dubai.

"My only advice is to work hard and to have the determination." One works from 9 a.m. to 12 midnight every day. "A little luck is important, too, because there are a lot of very talented designers, souls running back." A good business sense is also vital, he added.

When asked about the look of Furne One, the designer turned self-conscious. "I don't know, just some and one," he said, turning red. One of his friends, also a designer in Dubai, said One while Michael Cinco's look is feminine and glamorous, One's is edgier. One said he dreams of designing for Cate Blanchett, whom he perceives to be edgy, unafraid of breaking fashion rules even if it lands her on the worst dressed list.

'Toned down'

For his Philippine gala, One will show 40-50 pieces, some from his London Fashion Week collection, possibly "toned down" compared to how he would show it in Dubai. He will also be using custom-designed baljos made in Paris.

Said One: "I try my best to be not very Gary or very Michael. We have different styles." Both Cinco and Santiago are friends, One said, so he'd rather not be pitted against them.

If detractors of Dubai-based designers dismiss their recent coed dresses here as, well, "too Dubai," One said, "Okay lang. No. 1, we're not selling the clothes here. They can't afford it here. We're just showing the technique, the quality, the artistry. It's important especially for young designers, who are still researching, so are."

IT'S about time we give them recognition,' says Rajo Tinga, with Dina Iturri, of our so-named Filipino designers. She co-chairs One's gala fundraiser here on Oct. 9. PHOTO BY ALVIN QUA

COMPARED to his contemporaries Cary Santiago and Michael Cinco, One reportedly describes his work as "strong" (Hands-on) his style is "subtler."

ON THIS page are pieces from Furne One's recent collection called "Lady of the Lake," which evokes the hip area. For focal point of this clothes, he emphasizes a woman's curves. Showing skin—of course—is a must in cosmopolitan Dubai, said One. For this collection, he combines soft tulle with other fabrics such as French lace, para-silk, "smashweed" tulle, silk taffeta aesthetics, with a generous sprinkling of Swarovski crystals and beads on the bodice.

ON HUGGING: Armani Exchange present linen maxi dress in black and taupe, gold and silver strappy shoes by Bonnie's. On Micheline: Blazer, gold tank, black harem pants by Armani Exchange; Bulgaria Coin jewelry; Vacheron Constantin watch; Fendi bag

Syjuco sisters act

ARMANI Exchange black crepe dress, Giuseppe Zanotti purple satin pumps and Salvatore Ferragamo bag

ARMANI Exchange black top and khaki linen miniskirt, Giuseppe Zanotti red-and-black pumps, and Salvatore Ferragamo red bag

LEMAS: purple striped dress, shoes and bag by Penshi

ARMANI dress, Ferragamo red patent bag and Bulgaria Coin jewelry

By Larry Levine
Contributor

NO SURPRISE that Maxine and Micheline Syjuco are artistically inclined. Their parents are Cesare and Joan Marie Syjuco, probably the most awarded multimedia artists in the country today.

Dad Cesare has a Palanca Award for Literature and a Thomas Outstanding Young Men award for art and culture, while mom Joan Marie received the Art Association of the Philippines gold medal for sculpture.

Maxine, a print and a visual artist, and Micheline, a renowned jewelry designer handpicked these outfits from Bonnie's Makati, with the help of Anna Go, to show their exposure/care in fashion.

They also modeled a few cocktail frocks and shoes from the Italian shoe and bag brands supported by Dina Tantoco. Here is a collaboration of semi-chic vibe shoe at the Bonnie's flagship store in Makati with the special Mosaico Glass exhibit in backdrop.

Art and fashion, after all, are sisters, just like these gorgeous and talented Syjuco siblings.

Maxine Syjuco

Print, mixed, artist

Tell us about the Syjuco painters, sculptors and filmmakers in your family.

My father is Cesare Syjuco. He is the most awarded multimedia artist of our time. He has won everything—AAP Gintó Prize in Painting, Balanas Award for Literature, Pedro Bafiew Lodicana Award for Art Criticism, TOYM for Art And Culture Advancement. My mom is renowned performance artist Joan Marie Syjuco. She is also an AAP gold medalist for sculpture. My brother AO is a composer, my sister Yric is a filmmaker and performance artist, and my other sister Maxine is an artist and poet as well.

Micheline Syjuco,

Jewelry designer

At what age did you realize you were artistically inclined. Did you go to school?

I've been fascinated by art all my life. I grew up around the likes of Pepot Gallego, Renato Lacuesta, Joel Torre, Rep Fenix. Art just comes naturally to me. I graduated magna cum laude in Business Management from Ateneo.

How and when did you get started designing jewelry?

I started designing jewelry back in the '90s when my siblings and I had our band Pussy At that time, we were the youngest commercially awarded band in the country, and I would design all our costumes and accessories. After college, I picked up on it again because I couldn't find jewelry I wanted to wear in the current market.

My very first cuff was made from a Nestlé cream can that was hand-beaten and dipped in silver, then oxidized and distressed. I put an amethyst stone in the middle, and you really couldn't tell it used to be a can.

How hard is it to design rings and bracelets? And which is harder to design, jewelry or hats and necklaces?

I enjoy the process of designing, whether it be jewelry, clothes, hats, bags. My clients are women who aren't afraid to square some with daring. They have to stand in stand out and be the center of attention. Tessa Prieto-Valdes is one of my favorite clients. She is just burning with life and self-confidence.

You had a show lately. How long did it take you to finish a collection and what were your inspirations?

My show at Mondoro Daily Prive took a few months to complete. I wasn't given much time to prepare, so I got to work right away. There were many sleepless nights involved. My inspirations came from the 1920s. I wanted to create contemporary hats and head pieces that still exuded that Old-World vibe. The jewelry was on the modern side, so together, they complemented each other nicely.

Where do you see yourself in the next five years? Do you wish to still abroad like Cebedlos?

I would love to expand to the foreign markets in the next few years. That's truly one of my biggest goals. My pieces are one-of-a-kind, however, they are not mass-produced.

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HILDA Grahame, David Ackerman, Elmar Crugen, Capt. Jesse Mars and Oleh Crugen

LULU Villarica, Sonny Fernandez and Juan Raymundo

BID CHIEFS chairman Richard Gordon; newly elected president of AWPG Baby Ortiz, guest of honor Ambassador A. Sahranjit of Singapore and Sally Mallonong

ESTER Jacobs and women of all seasons Mel Linares

YELLA Grimaldo-de Dios

PRESIDENT Baby Boyson-Ortiz accepts the gavel from former president Baby K. Lim.

YMCA Manila inducts officers of All Nations Women's Group

HELLO King, Rep. Dan Fua and Philip Nicolajsen

INDONESIAN Ambassador Y. Kristiarto S. Legowo and his wife Camilla

IT WAS a night for women of power and education, dabbings, when the All Nations Women's Group of the YMCA of Manila, Inc. held its awesome induction at the Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. As I learned in, I could feel the energy and pride of the 2010-2011 officers all dressed to the regime end. Civic and charity-oriented women of stature, vivacious Dr. Leonida "Baby" Boyson-Ortiz, headed the reception line with guest of honor and speaker, Ambassador of Singapore A. Sahranjit.

During dinner, Baby told me she serves in the Board of Governors for the Philippine Red Cross as national treasurer and got involved in tons of other organizations and earned the degree of Humanities Honoris Causa for her humanitarian involvement, palangges.

Baby made sure the invitees had a good time, dabbings. It was a different kind of event for me, but with the tons of trustees mingling all over the ballroom, my eagle eye couldn't miss the sight of them partying their way for a photo with some of the namedrop publes. One of them, I noticed was tiled, but kept his cool.

After all was said and done, the die-hards stayed on 'til they were almost swept out of the place, while others just had a good time with their friends.

Yes, our good hostess, well-seasoned, dedicated lady to the newly elected president of AWPG should take a bow for a job well done, dabbings.

Casey Moreno's celebration

Not one, not two, but three awesome parties (actually more if you count the private ones, dabbings). That's how uber event PR mistress, Casey Moreno celebrated another year of fabulousness.

The first was a cocktail party at the Manila Polo Club hosted by her husband Jake Moreno and their children Jacob, Jessica and Jeremy. Then there was a dinner party at Cirkulo hosted by her friends Ricky Lo, Ricky Reyes, Boy Abunda, Ces Drilon, Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Ethel Ramos, Cheche Lazaro, Ed Lejano, Ramon Tulfo, Ruby Rodriguez, Ramon Ang, Ricky Vargas, Tonyboy Cojuangco, Tessie Tantoco, Ambassador Ed Malaya, Ambassador Willy Gaa, Ambassador Tony Lopez, Ambassador Jose Cuisia, Ambassador Lauro Baja, Ambassador Jose Brillantes, Ambassador Jose Ingles, Ambassador Jose Romualdez, Ambassador Jose Zaide, Ambassador Jose Ong, Ambassador Jose Yulo, Ambassador Jose Santos, Ambassador Jose Reyes, Ambassador Jose Cruz, Ambassador Jose Lim, Ambassador Jose Tan, Ambassador Jose Chua, Ambassador Jose Sy, Ambassador Jose Go, Ambassador Jose Ang, Ambassador Jose Co, Ambassador Jose Uy, Ambassador Jose Gan, Ambassador Jose Ong

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Bulgari by Rossellini

ROSSELLINI bag with snowflake twist lock

The actress-model designs a limited-edition bag incorporating real jewelry

By Alec T. Vergara

THE LUXURY bag market continues to heat up. No less than high-end jewelry brand Bulgari has acknowledged this by training the spotlight on its leather goods collection.

For its 2010 fall-winter accessories line, Bulgari has even tapped Renaissance woman Isabella Rossellini—former model, sometime actress, illustrator, writer and onscreen zoologist—to design a '50s-inspired handbag embellished with real snowflakes.

In line with the Italian brand's global thrust, Bulgari's local distributor launched Wednesday last week its fall-winter bag collection, including new versions of the iconic Diva bag, with a fashion show outside its Emerald 4 store in Makati.

The collection shows a great deal of inspiration from Bulgari's heritage as a jewelry company. Interesting textures and majestic hardware reminiscent of Bulgari's classic jewelry lines and symbols such as Parenthesi, double Bulgari, coins and BOI are evident in a number of bags.

Variations of the Chandra, the same bag endorsed by actress Julianne Moore, also come in lightweight and distressed calfskin and python that are either pearlized or done in metallic. Similar variations also apply to the more formal-looking Mondo with its iconic coin studs and adjustable chain straps.

For more casual events, Bulgari also offers a line of lightweight totes and shoppers either made of leather or laminated canvas with leather trims. Men can also get their hands on a number of messenger bags and totes in black or dark gray.

MAGAZIN B1

ISABELLA Rossellini and actress-mother Ingrid Bergman in 1956 outside Bulgari's flagship store in Rome

Bulgari by Rossellini

From page B1

Growing importance

To further underscore the luxury bag market's growing importance, Mario Savigni, GM of Bulgari in the Philippines, said the one-to-three-month waiting period for the quantity piece to make way—if only for a night—for the bags.

"A growing number of Bulgari stores the world over are converting their stores into bag shops," said Savigni. "Half is devoted to core products consisting of jewelry and watches, while the other half features accessories such as bags, sunglasses, ties, belts, pens and key chains."

In some big cities like Rome, Bulgari has a separate shop exclusively devoted to accessories. In Tokyo, it has a multi-level store with each floor featuring a specific product line.

Since both its branches in Makati (Greenbelt 1 and ATRIA store) is big enough to be turned into two shops, Bangkok is considering reassigning a space in Beaute's Makati to feature the brand's leather goods and accessories collection.

For the meantime, Savigni has highlighted a number of key pieces from the current bag collection in both stores. He ordered a limited number of pieces per style, including the limited-edition bag designed by Rossellini.

"In keeping with Bulgari's tradition of using only the best materials, its bags are fashioned from the finest skins and hardware," said Savigni. "This and the rich heritage of bag making in Italy have resulted in chic, versatile, durable and lightweight products that are impervious to trends."

A cross between Hermes Kelly and classic Bamboo (because of its huge twist lock), the structured and lady-like Rossellini bag would be one of the few commercially available bags out there incorporating real jewelry. The twist lock found in front of the bag is fashioned from amethyst, while its base is made of shiny enamel.

Big fan

Rossellini is perhaps one of the best persons to lend her creativity to Bulgari. Her late mother Ingrid Bergman, a big fan of the brand, introduced Rossellini to Bulgari as a child. A teenage Rossellini often joined her mother and daughter walking towards Bulgari's Via Condotti shop in Rome sometime in the mid '80s was displayed in the circus. Isak Lisunich on the night of the fashion show.

CHANDRA in leather and canvas

BULGARI tube in laminated canvas and leather

ROSSELLINI and her sporty vision for the Bulgari

(CLOCKWISE from left) Men's collection in leather and laminated canvas; cast member of the Chandra with chain strap; Monica in reusable playsuit

BOHO Chandra with beaded detail

Apart from wearing Bulgari's baubles to special events, Rossellini, together with other celebrities, lent her name and face to the brand's partnership with Save the Children in 2009. Bulgari marked its 125th anniversary last year by selling commemorative silver rings for the benefit of "Save the Future." A limited-edition piece was created in addressing the plight of impoverished children.

"Isabella designed the bag based on how she would use it," said Savigni. "She even paid attention to the fitting by choosing light-colored essentials to make it easier for women like her to find what they're looking for."

Primed labels in the form of tassels, which Rossellini also designed, makes up the bag's lining. Apart from adding a touch of artistry to the bag's interior, studs have a special place on Rossellini's heart. The lovely creature was the subject of one of her recent documentaries on the environment.

Although Bulgari, a family-owned business based in Rome, has had a long tradition of designing and selling jewelry, it launched its first high-end bag collection only in 1997. It opened its first store in the Philippines in 1996 at G/F SM on Ayala Avenue.

"Bulgari's global thrust has always been to allow its bags to compete on its own merits," says Savigni. "On our end, now that we've established its core business of jewelry and watches in the Philippines, the time is right to put the spotlight on Bulgari's bags."

Khaki is the new black

The Hindu dust color is now the color palette on the catwalk

By Stef Calvi

AFTER WE'VE seen the reign of khaki, the Hindu dust color that, is now the color palette on the catwalk. From its evolution of cream, buff, ecru, tan, camel and beige.

The lighter shade of brown has been associated with Burberry's utilitarian trench coats and classic Sherlock trousers, which we've now seen reworked to suit our times.

Taking the lead is Chloé's Fall/Winter RTW 2010 collection. "Beige, beige and more beige," reported Sarah Mower of Style.com on Chloé's take on the earth tone.

"With such thorough commitment (but until Sudbury through the draw), it almost resisted Hannah Marchildon was reluctant to offer anything else," she said, pertaining to the brown, silk blouses, high-waisted flared trousers and coats that played with the fine line of the season.

The romance with this neutral shade has found its way into Gucci's trousers, handbags and suit jackets. Capri pants are ruffled khaki pants are now loose, pleated and flared and belted.

Lanvin created draped dresses with the same hues for evening affairs, while Mulberry had a happier take on the neutrals, paired khaki cigarette pants and sweaters coupled with warm colors of orange and yellow.

How to accessorize

For this classic neutral color, metallic gold detailing are the perfect additions. Or opt for Prada's rendition; dresses were teamed with knitted khaki socks with patent square heels.

Ditch the biker, rock look for a cooler attitude with leather in suede or tan, almost like sweet chic when rewelled into dresses and tops.

When it comes to the footwear, animal prints give you that chic edge. Or go for more earth tone colors and textures. The "monkey march" look, which is also in vogue this season.

The new khaki is at the cooler end of the fashion spectrum that features a lot of clean lines and fresh modern cuts. Its one color we're seeing with this new sense color; one can round out and be chic minus the protocol-ness.

LEIGHTON dressing at Prada, who's collection khaki trench gets modernized, paired with knitted stockings

DIFFERENT shades of khaki at Chloé's F/W 10 collection. Stylish combinations of capris, tops and coats

VARIATIONS of the dust hue at Gucci's F/W 10 collection

MULBERRY paired khaki with warm orange and yellow at the F/W 10 collection

KHAKI in all shades was the key element at Gucci's fall show

DOROTHY Perkins' military coat

LEATHER dress feels like second skin, by Dorothy Perkins

PERFECT ADD-ONS (clockwise, from top left) colorful knitted stocking at Prada; Charm clutch by Gucci; leopard-print pony-skin shoes by Jimmy Choo

Brazilian footwear promo contest

BRAZILIAN FOOTWEAR brands Ipanema, Grendha and Rider presents Where Have Your Sandals Gone? promo. The contest is open to all Ipanema, Grendha and Rider owners who purchased their pair while traveling outside the country. Details may be sent at sandal_candidate@yahoo.com before Sept. 11. For more info, log on to http://www.queensmalls.com.

Sandalias festival

Ipanema, Ipanema Grendi Rideckless, Grendha and Rider will give free passes to the Sandalias Festival on Sept. 25 and 26 at the Activity Center of Trinoma Mall. Every purchase of Ipanema, Ipanema Grendi Grendhan, Grendha and Rider from Sept. 1-26 OR 12 more entries/ coupons/ one pass to the Sandalias Festival along with its special attractions.

Superkids 2010

Superkids 2010 is set on Sept. 16-17, Rywalton room 1, SMX Convention Center, Diosdado Drive, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City.

Superkids 2010 will discuss the latest in child care and development for pre-school teachers and parents. Among them: "Understanding the Learning Access Models of the 21st-

century Child" and "Understanding the Communication styles of the 21st-century Child" by Dr. Ms. Teresa Double Kilburn. A child and adolescent expert, "The 21st-century Learning Environment: After bathers for the Classroom" and "A Whole New Kid—What makes the 21st-century Child Tick?" by Ms. Sandra De Sosa, an educational consultant, who will discuss the newest learning environments, inform children's care, learning and create possibilities using varied approaches.

For details, call 8900661 or 8903837, or e-mail booking@primerworldwide.com.

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MDH announces appointments of 3 top posts

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SM CITY PAMPANGA

Elmer "Dado" Reyes is a former champion who has won a number of international tournaments. He is the first Filipino to become a World Boxing Organization (WBO) Super Flyweight champion. He also became the first ever WBO World Light Fly Champion.

Beatriz "Pia" Pamintuan – **Tenors** is an international singing group combining classical and lyrical tenor voices in a unique style. They have been featured on globally acclaimed programs like Asian Pop Music Festival, Live Aid, and Live 8. They received a TONYS award for Outstanding Women in the Broadway Series and is the Gold of Cultural Excellence from the International Association of Lions Clubs, District of Geneva.

SM CITY BACOLOD

Bobi Tiokson is a London-based fashion designer, businessman and consultant. He has created clothes for international celebrities like the late Princess Diana, Jacqueline Kennedy and Imelda Marcos. He was a panelist of the reality show competition Project Runway Philippines. He was the host of Bobi Tiokson's Fashion Show.

Hurog Nonos of Negros is a singing group made up of the Nonos Brothers, Rodrigo A. de Padua and Ana Feliciano and Kaneyshaven. Last 2005, they won the Grand Champion Asian Wedding Contest in the World in the 13th Wedding Expo/Philippines at Hongkong Asia and were featured on ABC's "Good Morning America". They also won the 2010 National Convention for Culture and Arts award.

SM CENTER VALENZUELA

Tyson Sy is an international race car driver. When he was 15, he became the youngest Filipino, Formula Three champion in the Asian Formula Three Series. He is also set to compete in the Star Mazda Championship in the United States.

Lance Rodriguez is a commercial model making a positive impact in the industry. He is well-groomed, appealing and sophisticated. He has perfect poise in modern ramp styles. His ability and accountability as a model is commendable by many. Currently, Lance, Global Filipino ambassador, is also set to compete in the Mr. Global Universe and Mr. Universe pageants in New York.

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SM CARES

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

The (no) mirror diaries

By Pam Pastor

Dove's 7-Day No Mirror Challenge wasn't as easy as I thought it would be

WHEN DOVE'S publicist Annie Hergen invited me to participate in the Dove Seven-Day No Mirror Challenge, a challenge that aims to liberate women from obsessing too much about one's flaws, I immediately said yes.

I was confident—cocky, even. "Hmm," I said. "It will be a breeze. I really go for days without looking at myself in the mirror."

I had good reason to be cocky—at least that's what I thought.

Unlike most women, I have an unusual trait to cultivate. While you will find all kinds of crap in my bag—from old receipts and all kinds of rubber to a bottle of Shiseido—you will never see a compact there. When I go to the ladies' room, I head straight to the cubicle, do my thing, wash my hands and zip out of there really fast, most of the time without bothering to glance at my reflection.

RAYB./Manansquel

PHIL Lazaro

The only time I even paid interest my real attention was when I discovered The Mirror Project, a website that allows people from all over the world to post self-portraits taken on mirrors and other reflective surfaces. When that website died, my love for mirrors died too.

So when I found out that all I needed to do to participate in the Dove Seven-Day No Mirror Challenge was to wash my face with Dove soap in the morning and at night, shoot daily video diaries and avoid mirrors for seven days, I said, sure, no problem.

This is going to be easy, I told myself.

But I was wrong.

Day 1

On the very first day of my challenge, I found a pink compact on top of my office table. At first I thought someone had accidentally left it there until I found out that my cousin Ki had sent it to me. Weird. I didn't know if it was a coincidence or an omen.

Despite the suspicious appearance of a mirror, they I was a breeze. I just had to remind myself to keep my eyes closed while washing my face in fear of seeing my reflection accidentally.

We had been given a Dove Seven-Day No Mirror calendar which was peppered with inspiring quotes to encourage us to complete the challenge. "I don't need a mirror to know that I'm beautiful in body, mind and spirit," I read from the calendar on the first day.

Day 2

It was on the second day that I realized that the challenge wasn't going to be as easy as I thought. I didn't realize before but we are surrounded by reflective surfaces—mirrors, car windows, laptop and even mirror-like photo screens.

A couple of times I freaked out because I saw my reflection in my peripheral vision. It was kind of funny being scared of my own reflection.

I am grateful though that on Day 2, I spent seven hours in a place free of mirrors—I was in the kitchen baking cupcakes. And when you're that busy, there's really just no time to think about mirrors.

That evening, I checked the calendar and saw this quote from Sophia Loren. "Beauty is how you feel inside and it reflects in your eyes. It is not something physical." The calendar asked me to remember the last time I felt beautiful. I felt beautiful in the kitchen earlier that day smeared with chocolate and dressed in my faded old apron, making silky Swiss meringue butter-cream frosting.

Day 3

My favorite part of the challenge were

Style and beauty mavens tell how to look good all the time

I CAN name two personally stylish and elegant women whom I've never (yes, never) seen with an eyeshadow out of place: Agnes Bengson, former beauty editor of Preview who is now a contributing editor for the magazine; and Rein Carlos, former Marie Claire senior fashion editor, now Town & Country Magazine's fashion and beauty director.

I've travelled with Bengson on press junkets, and we've shared a room in some trips. Not once did I ever see her lashing makeup and without point, even on some of the hottest days on the planet (the best of us tend to be quizzed in jet-set drawers).

Carlos, on the other hand, is French-chic epitomized. I may have stolen the idea of wearing Ray Bans when strolling in a city from same makeup from her.

A quick look at Carlos' Facebook profile will yield photos that are chick delighted gasps from even the most stylishly haute couture aficionados. Carlos is simply schematic: casual-to-sexy, fashion-forward dresses.

These days, I think of them a lot, especially when I want to evoke a sense of glamour and elegance, without trying too hard. Time, I have to wake up earlier to look put-together as they do—from hair to footwear. But, whenever I make that effort, I reap rewards in the form of a confidence boost, clearer command of myself and conversation that I'm doing the right thing—ironically, exactly how one must feel when living and working in New York City.

And whether you live in Manila, Singapore, or wherever in the world, these key characteristics and traits, plus good old beauty and style habits, can be quite helpful.

Fragrance factor

Need the classic advice of being around your "scent circle"? Carlos says that you create when you stick your right arm out and do a brief shout. That's how far your perfume should reach. With a multitude of options, how do you find a signature aroma?

"Make good use of those testers that are readily available," offers Bengson. "Spritz some onto your wrist, then walk around and wait for the scent to settle and mix with your (body chemistry). (If you're in the mall, do a little window shopping first). If you're happy with the scent, it's a keeper!" She adds, "Trust your instincts... you'll simply know when you've found the perfect scent."

No empirical elements, Bengson points out a choice between "day" and "evening" scent, over "seasonal" fragrances: more common in colder regions. "Pay dog it's best to stick to light florals or sweet and fruity concoctions," she suggests. "For night, you can bring out the bolder and more intense perfumes."

When in doubt, go for a custom perfumer that can easily be worn throughout the year, anytime of the day.

Skincare

Bengson is a personal fan of La Mer Moisturizing Cream and Glacial Marine Hydrator Imperial Cream. Both products command premium prices, but for people who have used them, the splurge seems worthwhile. I personally like La Mer's super gentle formula for those times when the skin around my eyes gets crushed during a cold.

Bottom line is, find the best skincare products you can afford, then stick to a daily regimen of cleansing, moisturizing and sun protection. (And, don't forget the lips. Carlos uses Fresh Sugar Rose Tinted Lip Treatment SPF15.) Many creams and lotions are available as a function of department store juices. For as long as you're diligent in applying them, they can be effective in clearing complexions and keeping skin supple.

What you wear

"The lunch reality is that women are judged by their looks," says Michelle Galliano, author of "Women, Work & The Art of Savoir Faire" and "French Women Don't Get Fat." "Nice looks count. How you dress, how you are groomed, how you present yourself, and more."

For necessity, you don't have to spend a fortune on clothes and the latest trends and items off the fashion roll. "It's all in the accessories," says Carlos. "Even with a simple white shirt or LBD, it's about adding on some finishing touches...a statement earrings or necklace, a great belt or watch or shoes. SM Department Stores and Forever 21 have a lot of cheap yet chic finds."

If you're not looking for investment pieces, Carlos recommends a pair of diamond studs as a good medicine.

"Buy the best that you can afford. (There) rather wasn't department—you can wear them over and over and pass them on to your kids in the future."

Stress management

Stress and fatigue can put a dampen on your fashion and beauty quotient. When you allow yourself to be aggravated by a situation—be it at work or in your personal life, a spate of zits that not manifests in your look and bearings. Your shoulders slump, the pimples come out—definitely not a glamorous sight. Fashionably speaking, stress will always be a part of life, so the earliest tips figure out how to effectively combat it through exercise, therapy, or even regular doses of good clean fun-the better for your health, well-being and of course, looks.

Minding your manners

You could be wearing the oldest, most faded frock from your closet, but if you exude grace, are polite, and show impeccable manners, you become the most dashing person in the room. And others all else fails, take this tried-and-tested tip and speak honeyed words—or even Bengson: "Stay positive and wear a peachy-pink blush."

Marial Chua is the former beauty editor of Inventory, Cosmopolitan and GR! Magazine Philippines and is now based in New York. Visit http://beautyandstyle.blogspot.com and her blog http://StyleSmartNow.com.

KORBI Carbonite Paris

AGDIO Bengson

BEAUTY RX

Marial Chua

Best beauty bargain finds

Mylene Dizon: 8-12 glasses of water a day keep our skin rockin'!

HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

Believe it or not, it doesn't take a fortune to look fabulous. Just because the brand name isn't up in lights doesn't mean you should skip over it, so readily. You'll be surprised with the finds that shopping at your local drugstore or supermarket would yield.

I asked four bargain-hunting beauties to show us the best choices for your pesos. Find out the lowest-to-most cheapies, from Dencing cleanse to P15 makeup removers. Then mix of deals and steals that others can't come to bemoan it's the quality that's priceless.

BACKSTAGE PASS

Isabel Roces

Jackie Miller

Professional Model, Host

+ Petroleum jelly— Petroleum jelly is probably the cheapest and most efficient beauty product ever. It moisturizes your lips for hours than any other lip balm out there. You can buy a small jar of it and carry it around absolutely anywhere. It's very cheap, effective and it adds a lovely shine to your lips. It also helps with the rashes and skin problems a lot of people have due to the heat or the weather.

+ Hilips Hale Vitamin Cupcakes— These hair cupcakes are probably the only reason why my hair continues to become and shine. Use one of these cupcakes daily to retain your hair's health and beauty. Best yet, it's not too harsh on our wallets.

+ Johnson's Baby Oil— After work, it's always so difficult to remove my makeup. I've tried several types of makeup removers, but none of them did the job. I started using baby oil as a makeup remover and it worked far better than any other makeup remover I've tried, and it's perfect for the skin. A small bottle is less than P15.

NIVEA Lip Care Lip Balm

KAREN Pamintuan

+ Nivea Lip Care Lip Balm— This lip balm is a great moisturizer, and it adds an amazing tint to the lips. It gives you a very pure and it keeps your lips healthy. It's cheap and effective and is probably my favorite lip balm of all time.

+ St. Ives Oatmeal & Shea Butter Body Lotion— This lotion smells absolutely worthy and it's great for my skin. It's got a great price for a big bottle, and it lasts long.

Mich Dulce

Clothing and Hair designer

Beauty deals, for me, almost always come from the drug store: drugstore lotions for all-day skin, Celebrezque moisturizer, Pantene conditioner, Maybelline Great Lash Mascara and Hydrogen Peroxide (which is great for lightening scars and dark spots).

JACKIE Miller

Karen Pamintuan

Entertainment and TV host

+ Loreal True Match Super Blendable Foundation— I was using a lot of very expensive liquid foundations before, but recalled that True Match is budget-friendly and fantastic on the skin. It comes really well with the Shu Uemura UV base foundation and gives like a natural glow.

+ Bioderma Crealine H2O Micellar Water Solution— This lotion smells absolutely terrific and it's great for my skin. It's got a great price for a big bottle, and it lasts long.

MICH DULCE

L'ORÉAL True Match Foundation

+ Proteque Liquid Eyeliner from Beauty Bar— I swear by this over any other liquid eyeliner. It glides on easily and is long-lasting. The small bottle actually lasts quite a while, and buying a new one doesn't burn a hole in your pocket.

Mylene Dizon

Actress, model

+ Isabelle Co-Cosmetics for damaged hair— Being an overseas villista requires big honorable mark, which leads to mega damaged locks. Her skin product is great for my hair.

+ Johnsons baby oil light— For removing eye make up.

+ Olay Total Effects line.

+ And the cheapest, most effective of all: Loads' old MD8—8-12 glasses a day to keep our skin rockin'!

More tips

Here are some more tips to help you obtain the best results from your products.

Hair: Lather up only a couple of times a week. Do (hope you don't shampoo, rinse hair with warm water to release natural oils that fight the frizz.

Makeup: To make your eyes look bigger, apply a matte pencil as the inner rims of the top and bottom lash lines. (Always sharpen the pencil first to eliminate bacteria).

Skin: Gently scrub your lips with a washcloth every morning to prevent dryness and flaking throughout the day.

Try: The Funny Incense Make up Brush, distributed by Standen Cosmetics. The colors were chosen and specifically created for Filipino skin.

The (no) mirror diaries

those mirrorless I spent washing my face with Dove+ to turn a great way to begin and end the day—just me, my bar of soap and the cool soothing water.

Another thing I loved about the challenge is how it made me grateful for things I normally take for granted. On Day 3, I was thankful that my kilos of makeup is packing on my mother's Lip Smackers or my favorite O Bigelow Mentha lip balm. I don't know how other girls work a more elaborate concept of daily makeup would survive without mirrors.

Working into unfamiliar bathrooms and toilets was one of the trickiest things about the challenge. I felt like an FBI agent trying to figure out if a room was secure before walking in - and it was a good thing I took extra mentos. The ladies' room in the spa I went to had two giant mirrors. It was a big mirror which isn't it survived).

Every single day of the mirror challenge has shown me that mirrors are everywhere. In coffee shops, in malls.

It was liberating not to have to think about my reflection and how I look because there really are bigger things to think about but it was also hard trying to keep dodging mirrors and acting like I'm almost afraid of them.

Day 4

On Day 4, I failed the challenge.

I lost my eyeglasses so I went to an optical shop and tried on several pairs before picking one.

It was only after I picked a pair of new eyeglasses that I realized that I had used a mirror to check how they looked on me.

The horror.

Still, there are times when mirrors are necessary. This was one of those times.

Another instance when mirrors are necessary is if someone tells you you have something on your teeth. And that's exactly what happened to me during dinner as a Japanese restaurant.

I jumped up and made the bathroom my destination until I remembered that I wasn't supposed to look at mirrors. I went back to my seat and ate dessert.

I wasn't about to fail the challenge twice in one day.

Day 5

During this entire challenge, the oddest bonus for me were the lenses. I appear in front of my computer, just writing away. No rules of sensitivity encounters with mirrors, no need to dodge my own reflection.

I spent most of Day 5 working at my computer before attending a couple of events. So without three rules.

Day 6

On Day 5, I went on the supermarket. I thought I'd be safe from mirrors in the supermarket but I was wrong.

There are mirrors in the dairy section, mirrors in the vegetables section. But I was able to

From page 11

DOVE With Beauty Bar

dodge them and get to the directional fine without seeing my reflection anywhere.

Day 7

My Day 7 was also the day of Jessica Soho's Sabi Mirror Challenge lunch at Madison Grill in Greenhills.

There I had the chance to talk with other women who went through the challenge. A lot of us agreed that it was harder than we thought it would be.

The segment wrapping the video diaries of Dove Ambassador and TV host Lizi Schultz, model, yogini and radio DJ Papa Dimongsil, marketing manager and fitness enthusiast Ivy Campos, and Miss Woman ambassador and TV writer producer Mel Lopezos because we know exactly what they went through.

While I was grateful to have been given the chance to write about beauty, the time we spend thinking about how we look and the mis-mirrors play in our lives, I'm glad that the challenge is over. I've gone back to my normal ways—not really caring too much about mirrors but not afraid of them either.

The challenge may be over but I still begin and end my days in the same way—just me, my bar of soap and cool soothing water.

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~~P82.50~~

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~~P164.75~~

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~~P80.50~~
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Splenda
~~P89.50~~
Stash
~~P70.25~~

Jade
~~P50.75~~
Sunscare
~~P181.50~~

Fresh
~~P85.80~~
Smile
~~P145.10~~

Secure
~~P227.50~~
Caress
~~P197.10~~

Palmolive
~~P72.25~~
Colgate
~~P74.30~~

Surf
~~P131.50~~
Surf
~~P184.40~~

Downy
~~P62.75~~
Tide
~~P198.35~~

Downy
~~P184.75~~
~~P386.50~~

Golden Grain
~~P110.50~~
P80.25

Plumrose
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• White Radish P25.40/kg • Cucumber P35.80/kg • Kangkong P5.25/bundle
• Baguio Beans P25.40/kg • Banana Heart Red P36.90/kg • Upo P36.30/kg
• Sampaloc Pangsigang P63.00/kg • Singkamas P22.00/kg

3 new beauty products for radiant skin and glossy lips

By Irene C. Perez

EXPERIENCING peeling and dry patches lately? The erratic weather—sunny in the morning, scorching by noon, and raining at night—could take a toll on your skin this season, giving you dry, undernourished, patchy complexion.

"It's during these wet months that you should take care of your skin more, especially those who have been out in the sun a lot in summer. It's the time to rebuild on your skin," said Lucie C. Migue, brand ambassador for Asia Pacific.

Three new Avon products were featured during Women-stem of Beauty launch, recently held at Blue Leaf in Bonifacio, Taguig. Avon 360° White Intensive Correcting Serum, Skin So Soft Radiant Glow Whitening Hand and Body Lotion, and Ultra Color Rich Mega Impact Lipstick—all complement each other to give you a beauty boost this damp season.

Potent whitening serum

Avon 360° White Intensive Correcting Serum is the latest product to complete the newest Avon whitening collection consisting of a foaming facial wash, toner and day and night cream. The serum is said to be the most potent in the series, initially an anti-aging line. Avon ventured into the whitening trend to address the needs of those always on the search for new and better whitening balms.

"It is concentrated and targets skin in an quick as three days by turning off the production of melanin or dark skin pigment, cutting off calcium flow from entering the skin that apparently cause spots, and discharging existing melanin on the surface to even out skintone," said Migue.

Stage actress Lea Salonga, in an earlier interview said, "I don't really want to get advice, but I want brighter, clearer skin, and Avon brought me that." She has been endorsing Avon since the '90s and said Avon and the makeup are "blessing" to her Asian complexion.

"What makes the serum different from other whitening products is the patented Whitelity Technology that doesn't just give fast but healthier skin," added Jacqueline Marcelo, Avon Southeast Asia manager for skincare.

Body love

To make sure your skintone is even all over, Migue suggests the Skin So Soft Radiant Glow Whitening Hand and Body Lotion. It contains Pearl Powder that makes skin smooth and glowing upon application. The lotion also has the advanced Brightening Complex that reduces the production of dark spots while increasing production of light pigments, and is incorporated with Jojoba Technology which soothes dry skin.

"The Skin So Soft series is the bestseller among our lotions, and Avon has a lot. It's a favorite of the Pinay because it's inexpensive and perfect for our weather. We have special variants, and when they run out, another variant comes out still from the Skin So Soft collection. This one is expected to be a hit because a lot wants lotion skin," Migue said.

"It is important to keep skin hydrated after a bath, or when you spend long time in an air-conditioned office, putting on lotion is the fastest way to do that."

Update your look

Give your lip gloss a break and give your face an instant upgrade with a new lipstick. Avon Ultra Color Rich Mega Impact Lipstick has 10 shades available for the Filipino today, designed to give you a lift during the gloomy rainy days.

"The younger Filipino girls go for just tint and lip gloss. They aren't used to using lipstick thinking it's heavy to use, but now we have lipsticks that are rich in color and texture, light like a gloss," Migue said.

Ultra Color Lipstick, endorsed by Hollywood sweetheart Reese Witherspoon, has the patented Chromaxpro! Technology that reflects light and enhances color for that dramatic pout. The formula has iridescent pearls that boost color for evenier nuds, romantic pinks and not-so-red reds, with SPF 15 for sun protection.

"When you open it, you'd notice the difference in design. It has a pointy two-sided tip unlike the usual mix of lipsticks that crumbles the lipstick to glide on smoothly for full color payoff without risking or feathering," said Christa Jacinto-Sario, Avon Southeast Asia cluster associate category manager for color.

It comes in the following high-definition shades: Personal Red Plum and Brilliant Berry for fair to porcelain skin; Divine Wine and Rockin' Red, for typ-earching red lips; Really Rose and Glamped Classy, warm shades of pink; Fuchsia Fun and Pink Pop for young-looking

LEA SALONGA says Avon's 360° White Intensive Correcting Serum helps her maintain a open-tone face that is bright and fair, but not pasty.

UPDATE your look for this rainy season with bright, warm shades from Avon's Ultra Color Rich Mega Impact lipstick line.

AVON president and general manager Mike Szukics and head of communications for Asia-Pacific Louie Migue

STASH your beauty loot in this roomy "Hello, Green Tomorrow" reusable bag, in order from your Avon ladies.

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LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

The accidental accessory designer

Noreen Tseng fuses metal with organic fiber in a design that meshes the modern and the traditional

By Kayo S. Lopez
Contributor

"IF I WON'T wear it, I won't make it," said 26-year-old Cebuano fashion accessory designer Noreen Tseng about her design principle. With no formal training in design—she has a degree in Computer Engineering—she credits common sense, reading books and plain old tinkering with jewelry components as her methods of learning.

After graduating from the University of San Carlos in 2007, she didn't push through with her plan to take up a fashion course in Shanghai and stayed put to help in the family business of supplying chemicals to local furniture exporters, accessories manufacturers and ship builders. When her father decided to expand their business to include supplying fashion jewelry components, Tseng found herself playing around with the pieces in her desk.

"I rummaged the beads together because they were right in front of me," she said. "I wanted to make something I could wear on a night out with my friends since I couldn't find accessories to match my outfits."

Her friends adored her designs, and started asking her to make pieces for them. She kept designing one-of-a-kind accessories and giving them away, until she had her big a-ha moment when a stranger came up to her one day and actually offered to buy what she was wearing. That experience not only gave her the confidence to call herself a designer, but it also made her realize she could make a business out of her hobby.

She officially launched Tseng with her first collection in December 2007, and tirelessly made a name for herself when she won the 2008 Cebu Fashion Accessory Design Competition (CFADC) and the Iris magazine's Editor's Choice Award at the Professional Designers category with her mandrel necklace that showcases mirrors encased in 18-carat gold-plated metal. She said the winning technique was inspired by a coffee table made of metal and rattan woven together she once saw in a footwear show.

She is by no means limited to fascinators for design ideas, however. Inspired by all things beautiful, including art, magazines and books, houses, tiles, geometric shapes and mosaic patterns, she said that she tends to go for more modern designs, which she then infuses with her own flair.

She sometimes sends for making things her own are best seen in her collection for Cebu Fashion Accessories Manufacturers' and Exporters' (FAME) foundation's Go Green Project, in which she designed a line of accessories with her trademark metal, incorporated with the more sustainable and ecologically sound abaca fiber.

What makes her statement pieces even more covetable is that they are literally one—or two or three—of a kind. "I never mass-produce anything. You can be guaranteed that only one or two other people have the same design, or for some pieces, none at all, actually," she happily said. "Girls who know what they want can actually come to my shop, sit down in front of me, and tell me exactly what they want done while I do it for them."

Sophisticated and never understated, her designs come to life with brass and resin. Tseng pieces can be abundant, she admitted, edges, as they are best worn with plain, simple clothes for color, silhouette look.

NOREEN Tseng wearing one of her pieces

NECKLACE of mirrors encased in 18-carat gold-plated metal

WHAT makes her pieces covetable is that they are literally one—or two or three—of a kind.

SOPHISTICATED and never understated, Tseng's designs come to life with brass and resin.

"I want Tseng to be known as a first-rate brand. I want Tseng to be a brand. Not as much for the profit. I don't design for the profit, but (rather) for the recognition," she said. "I want to go global someday!"

Indeed, she is well on her way.

Tseng is available at Ann Escario's boutique at 2/F Greenbelt 5 in Cebu. Tseng is at Fame Bldg., Hernan Cortes St., Tagbilaran, Bohol or City, and is open Monday-Saturday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Call (32) 422-0965 e-mail noreen_tseng@hotmail.com for orders.

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BEN

BIRD MACHINE

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Keep your home definitely more home, family and domestic matters. Also could include real estate matters. Avoid personal struggles with parents and partners. Also travel.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Don't take the backseat in your job as someone is going to get credit and attention. Things will start to get busy, and excitement will replace nothing. Patience is promised travel today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Avoid unnecessary discussions about money and possessions today. They could get complex and create unnecessary tension in relationships.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) It's a mixed bag today. However, some days you will have other emotional issues surrounding you. Also, financial people might appear or criticize you. Others needs first!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) It's easy to feel out of sorts today, as people, short moves, matters of valuables about problems. Also, you may have to deal with some unexpected.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Some issues with friends or acquaintances in their home. It's very easy for jobs or work matters to get complicated. Also, you may have to deal with people to integrate with you. Normally, this is tough today!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) It's small but challenging day for you. Someone close to you seems ready for outburst of your to do. Sometimes, the options and the interesting things in your life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) A mixed bag on social matters, religion, travel plans, social issues or anything having to do with higher learning. Someone might try to change your views about something.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) It's a good day to discuss how to share things or deal with inheritances. Also, some matters in your home need research. People are not quick to criticize these struggles are likely.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You'll have to run more than usual today. Also, you may have to deal with others today. Some issues in your life, and it is an area with home and Also, there will.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Something fantasy to do with you since your health would be challenging today. If you have ideas about improvements, people will resist your suggestions. Avoid!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Friends and surprises should be pulled with children today. Some struggles can promote confidence. And late things are not a then. Watch the urge to throw your weight around.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CLEAN, simple, classic

PENNY loafers with the pebbled Gommino sole

TOD'S winter Gommino boots

Italian luxury brand aims to strengthen foothold in Asia

By Alec T Vergara

FOR THE first time since Tod's debuted its initial line of signature driving shoes in the late '70s, the Milan-based Italian luxury leather goods brand will launch its latest marketing campaign in an Asian capital—Beijing—in October this year.

This development will follow in the heels of the global launch in Milan, said Mauro Maltz, general manager of Tod's Group in Asia-Pacific (except Japan and the Middle East). It's a departure from previous launches around Italy which were mostly held either in Tokyo or in New York.

"We will also do a launch in Japan, but this time, China will come first," he said.

Inspired by La Scala, the iconic opera theater in Milan, the multimedia campaign centers around a video, which underscores and aims to ensure the craftsmanship and attention to detail involved in the making of every Tod's product with that of the painstaking and creative work that goes behind every La Scala production.

"Tod's decision to do the initial launch in Beijing after Milan is any way of acknowledging how big and important the Asian market, particularly China, has become," said Maltz. "Asia (both) is a unique because everything spins around the region. The pace of its economy has become so fast that everything can change within a short period of time."

He, at the same time, thinks echoed Tod's philosophy of not relying heavily on any single market to propel its growth. In today's globalscape, with competition more fierce than ever, luxury brands that depend on a handful of markets are doing so at their own peril.

"We have to be consistent and properly represented all over Asia," he said. "Apart from quality products, also, strategically located stores and strong local partners who can support and implement our strategies are keys to Tod's success."

RP market

Hong Kong-based Maltz recently came to Manila to check on the Philippine market and strengthen ties with Stores Specialist, Inc. (SSI), exclusive distributor of Tod's shoes, bags and accessories in the Philippines.

Tod's has close to 80 stores in Asia, including in Manila flagship store in Greenbelt 4. A number of styles from its current fall-winter collection are also sold at Rustan's Tower, Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

Featured pieces include new colors and materials of Tod's classic D and C bags as well as new versions of comfortable and stylish ballerina flats for women and street Gommino for men.

PROUD version of D bag

UPDATED D bag

CLASSIC D bag

LEFT, Hilary Clinton holding a Tod's D Bag; above, Brad Pitt carrying a Tod's Travel Bag

MAURO Maltz, Tod's Group GM in Asia-Pacific

"We'll always be true to our origins, but we would always try to listen to and factor in influences from our various markets. In checking bags," said Maltz.

"I believe we've already satisfied one of the market's most important needs, which is the need to be flexible. People these days travel a lot and are involved in a great deal of activities. We try to make sure that our products are really comfortable, beautiful and versatile."

Maltz also shared one selling tidbit that bolsters Asia's lingering addiction to designer bags. While the demand exists for Tod's shoes and bags is 70:30 (in favor of shoes) for established markets like Europe and North America, in Asia it's 50:50.

"I think it can be attributed to the fact that we've had a longer history in Europe selling shoes," he said. "In Asia, we started making our presence felt much later when we're already offering both shoes and bags."

Eventually, a great deal of Tod's expansion in Asia happened during the height of tour Revelation in 2006. The number of stores, said Maltz, could have been bigger if not for the fact that Tod's is very cautious when it comes to expansion.

Like almost all high-end brands, anything less than a "prestigious" location won't do for Tod's. In China, it has even taken a more hands-on approach by managing DOSs or, as Maltz defined them, directly-owned stores.

"Since we're a publicly listed company (apart from Tod's, the group includes such brands as Hogan, Fay and Roger Vivier), I'm afraid I can't share with you store figures," he added. "But I'm confident about our future in the Philippines. It's not yet a very big market, but I believe there's plenty of room for improvement through stronger marketing activities."

Chic goods

Instead of Gentile, he preferred to discuss business and underscore the company's philosophy of producing chic, "more functional" and handcrafted leather goods prized by the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow, Julia Roberts, Sarah Jessica Parker, Uma Thurman, Drew Barrymore, Cate Blanchett, Brad Pitt and the late Princess Diana.

Tod's products, including those stylish and comfortable innovations such as the iconic Gommino soles (a.k.a. those trademark 133 rubber "pebbles" on each sole), are mostly designed and produced by hand in Italy by renowned Italian artisans and craftsmen using the finest materials from the most supple leather to the smoothest hardware—sourced the world over.

The brand, through Tod's Group president and CEO Diego Della Valle, a US-educated lawyer belonging to a family of Italian shoemakers, first introduced a line of high-end shoes steeped in the finest Italian tradition, but imbued with American marketing savvy (including its very scrappy name) sometime in the '70s.

"Tod's creative director is designer Derek Lam," said Maltz. "He's based in New York, but works closely with Tod's creative team in Italy. He's an American, but travels to the states in Asia. From time, we really have to run things up to Italy."

Tod's have expanded its product line by adding women's bags sometime in the late '90s. (It introduced men's bags fairly recently.) One of its earliest fans was Princess Diana, who was photographed by the paparazzi not long before her death toting several of its celebrated bags, including the iconic world-would later come to know as Tod's D bag.

"The D bag has been updated to look like what it is today," said Maltz. "But it has remained stylish and functional."

In many ways, the D bag echoes what Tod's is all about: classic, elegant, modern, stylish but never too trendy or fashionable. It's never about branding and bling, said Maltz. Those in search of the so-called "it" bag are better off looking elsewhere.

> Tod's to launch its latest campaign in Beijing this year, underscoring China's market clout

Glutathione boosts athletic aptitude

The most awarded 1st MBT & Men's Celebrity Open Badminton Tournament was held last July 30-31 and August 1 at the Club 88, also sponsored by MBT Saltrates to bring together a number of the nation's best women athletes from different categories and competitive, various industries including private businessmen and even sports and foreign nationals who have the competitive edge and have risen to the top of their game.

What makes an athlete or one to emerge as a 3-day sporting event like the MBT & Men's Badminton Tournament? Athletes represent countless extra-ordinary characteristics. According to Dr. Jimmy Gumpad, Medical Director of Glutathione Plus/Glutathione Health-AID - Antioxidant Intensive Booster, Detoxifier, "many world-class athletes are discovering the benefits of pharmaceutical glutathione boosts give them the edge over their competitors, bringing greater strength and endurance, diminished recovery time from injury, less muscle pain and fatigue, and muscle pain-controlling activity."

MBT Saltrates has responded to this by providing glutathione boosts to the body, providing only premium-grade reduced glutathione supplement products and staying on the top of its class for almost a decade now. MBT Saltrates has gone beyond just being a supplement delivering anti-oxidant products, but also provides a complete supplement for athletes needing a boosted endurance edge.

The 1st MBT & Men's Celebrity Open Badminton Tournament was a successful event showcasing not only athletic prowess but also a high level of camaraderie of good competitive spirit sportsmanship among participants. With its success, the organizers have proclaimed to support World Vision, with an aim to change the world by providing quality education to those who cannot afford it.

Rebate card helps clients get savings from monthly bills

By Annelle S. Tayao

PROBABLY THE number one thing people complain about these days is the amount they spend on bills for basic household utilities: phone, water, electricity. Add to that other daily expenses such as food and transportation, and it's doubly hard for the average Juan to save up.

Assisting consumers with such expenses is Citibank, with their new Citi Cash Back Card, a rebate card which will help Citi cardholders earn as they spend on basic amenities.

"We (at Citi) are always trying to look for ways for clients to get the best value for their money," said Sanjiv Vohra, country head for Citi Philippines, at the card's recent launch at H&R Impressions, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

One benefit Cash Back cardholders will notice, for example, is a 5-percent rebate on their monthly Meralco, PLDT or

WAY FORWARD Vice president for member relations Judith Chan'E, Citi country head Sanjiv Citi vice president for cards marketing Ma Mayuga, Citi country marketing director Cecille Fonacier and MasterCard vice president for global accounts Sarah Rae Aida Rahnati Chauhan

and myDSL bills starting now until the end of the year.

"We want to help them lower those financially challenging times with a credit card designed to give them more savings from their usual purchases," added Vohra.

Registration

Cardholders need simply to register their Meralco, PLDT or myDSL accounts in Citi One-Bill, which automatically charges these bill to their Citi card. Similarly, the option is for clients to log on to Citibank Online and use their Citi Cash Back card account to pay for their bills.

A 5-percent rebate on grocery buys in any supermarket can also be enjoyed by Citi Back cardholders, something they can avail on top of other discounts and promos, plus a 0.5-percent rebate on all other purchases. In a year, a cardholder could earn up to P12,000 in rebates.

"What's great is that cardholders can easily get untried rebates conveniently each month without the hassle of calling customer service representa," said Ben Teh Tiu, card business director. Star earn a minimum of P200 to rebates and those are automatically credited to your account."

An annual membership fee of P2,400 is needed to retain a Cash Back card account, but the fee can be waived as long as a cardholder spends at least P180,000 a year (P15,000 a month).

Cash Back cardholders also get a low interest rate of 2.9% percent per month.

"The Citi Cash Back card helps (consumers) get more of what they need—savings on where they spend the most," Teh Tiu said.

These sandals come with a heart—and some Swarovski

By Irene C. Perez

"WOMEN CAN be fash trouble and support a cause at the same time," said Abigaile Anwas de Leon, former beauty queen and model.

The slender and chic mother spent from being a makeup artist and celebrity image consultant, is also an avid cancer crusader. She is the spokesadvocate of Breathe to Breathe Foundation, the advocacy arm of the Cerebral Cancer Prevention Network Program and the Cancer Institute Foundation, which seeks to educate women on how to prevent cervical cancer—the second most common cancer in the females.

Her busy lifestyle requires her to dress up for both style and comfort, and Fitflops footwear complements that.

Fitflops, "the workout sandals you wear footwear," recently donated the shoes of the first three pairs of the limited-edition footwear Fitflops, a black luxurious pair studded with sparkling Swarovski crystals in Strawberry's. Each pair costs P5,4,900, providing that eye-catching "bling" to your comfortable. Only a hundred pairs were made available in the Philippines...and all sold out.

"We are glad that Fitflops can help save women all over the country from a killer disease," said de Leon during the "Shine" event held in Greenbelt 5. "I have two pairs and they're a nice break from heels."

De Leon said the pairs her footwear Fitflops with everything—leggings, jeans, shorts, skirt and top, dresses—and the same pair takes her from day to night with the right clothes and accessories. Her tip: Wear your Fitflops if you know you'll do a lot of walking—say, going to the mall, morning errands, going to work, doing the grocery—to make the most of your activities. Strolling around with Fitflops, she added, helps firm up the legs, buts and the hips.

Introduced in 2007, Fitflops has gained a global following with Oprah, designer Isaac Mizrahi, Anderson's, Rhoda Stewart and Jessica Simpson among its fans. The breakthrough footwear has the unique Microwobbleboard technology that "pumps up" your walk. It is designed to cushion your weight and relieve pressure on the legs. The fine heel absorbs shock and reduces tension on the ankle and knees as it helps tone your lower body. You might feel a little sore the first time you use it, but it's a sign that your Fitflops are working.

"Fitflops is better than the regular flip-flops because it provides more coverage" on your foot. It's more fashionable than a sandal, and of course, it gives you a better bod," said brand manager Melody Mabilo. "It is perfect for the active Pinay because it allows her to move with ease. The bestseller is the Elektra model, which has a sequined metallic design."

Premium flip-flops

Fitflops Premium Line was also introduced in the "Shine" event. The line includes the Rebel, which comes in leather or suede upper with antique finish studs, available in black and chocolate; Walkstar III—a suede-skin pump slip-on in natural and black; and Electra—suede-skin sandals backed up that comes in snowflake and sequin.

"We are updated with the designs abroad; except that ours usually used during winter because in Boracay's it's our weather, the kids here will be available soon, too," Mabilo added.

The Fitflop "women who shine" were also honored that night. Those exceptional Fitflops fans were from an online swing-poll in Fitflops Facebook page: businesswoman Jo-Anne Ty Hiong; doctor Marlies O De la Rosa; IT product development manager and polo dancer Mela Tan; college student Mylene Elma Tan; special education teacher Irma Quijano Lacson; and engineer Valerie May Javelosa.

Gracee Hyla and Mylene are self-confessed Fitflops addicts and admitted they regard their friends to vote for them in the poll because they are really fans of the footwear and know the models by heart.

"It is perfect for me because I use it as an after workout footwear. I do pole dancing with my group Pole Fatz almost every day," Mela said. Her younger sister Mylene said her Maria Pearce, a silver pair with Swarovski-encrusted straps, matches her shoe for "look, this design is not to wide as the other pairs and matches those with narrow fit like me," she said.

Lacson is thankful for Fitflops because it enables her to alleviate by much pain with special needs. "Sometimes they could really be expensive and I have to chase them and make them listen. I get one pair and wanted collection."

Fitflops, locally distributed by the Primer group, was given the Award for Design Excellence in the wellness category by Footwear Plus magazine last year. The simplest model cost over P3,000, or the cost of a basic cross trainer.

"It is an investment; it's a footwear with a gym built in," Melody said. "It's durable, easy to clean and apt for our tropical climate, and your purchase supports advocacies, too."

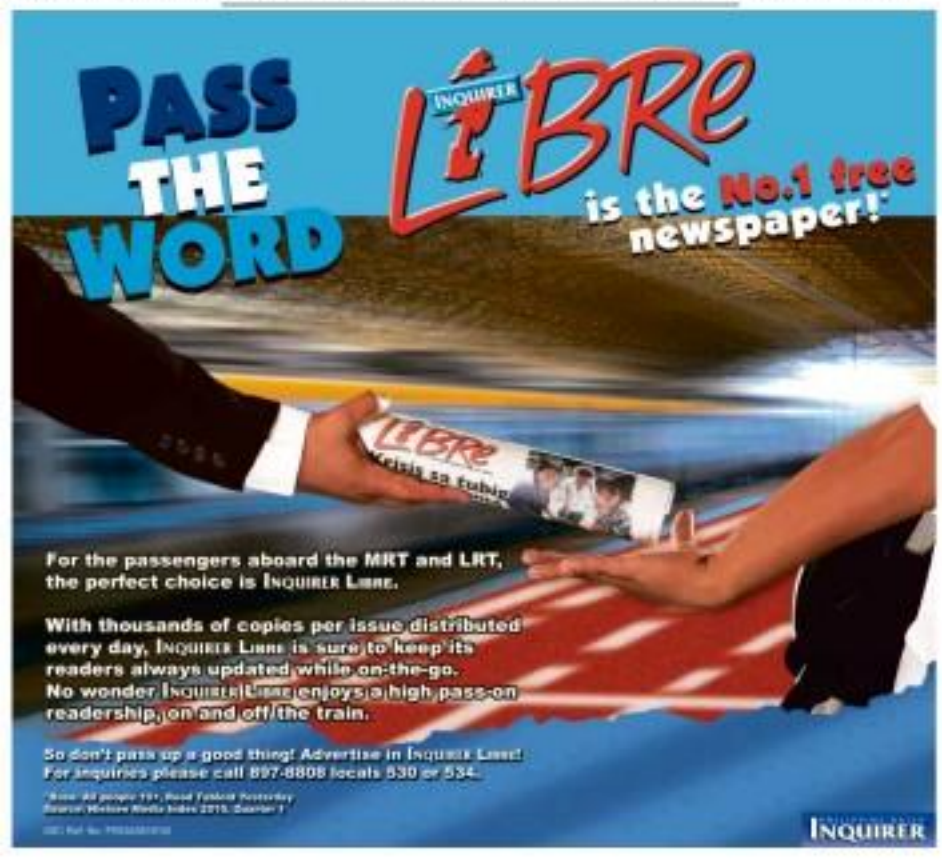
Visit www.fitflop.com; www.facebook.com/fitflop for the list of stores where Fitflops are sold.

BLING! Rockstar Walkstar with Swarovski crystals... without salamanders

FITFLOPS "women who shine": Melissa Mae Tan, Abigaile Anwas de Leon, Dr. Marlies O De la Rosa, Mela Tan, Jo-Anne Ty Hiong, Alana Quijano Lacson and reporter Valerie May Javelosa

PREMIUM FITFLOPS. From top: Rebel in black leather with antique-finish studs; Walkstar III in Mezcal suede-skin and Nuka snake-skin sandals backstrap sandals in Aumbrey; and versatile

CSCAP director Dr. Cecilia Lim, Brandwatch ambassador De Leon, Fitflops brand ambassador Melody Mabilo, Primer Group COO Jacky Quintos and host, Angel Aquino and the women of Fitflops in the recent "Shine" event in Greenbelt 5.



ENTERTAINMENT

Edna Brosnie G. Pelarde

Stars robbed of material wealth, sense of security

LINDSAY Lohan says she felt "violated." >>

ORLANDO Bloom suspected a friend. >>

PARIS Hilton got back her LV bag. >>

LOS ANGELES—Roughly two weeks before a judge would sentence her to jail, Lindsay Lohan sat in a downtown courtroom and recounted to a grand jury how a burglar's black fingerprints on her wall led her to get nerved that she had to move.

Monsieur Jane Orlando Bloom told the same grand jury a break-in at his home backfired him—frightened off those around him.

The appearance of Lohan, Bloom and four other celebrities in late June before a Los Angeles County grand jury were unannounced. Yet their testimony helped usher the young people who authorities say burglarized—and robbed—the stars had small doors willing to cut through fences and crawl through a doggie door to get in.

The stars' reactions revealed in recently unsealed testimony offer the most detailed account so far of the personal toll that resulted from the rash of celebrity break-ins by the so-called "Bling Ring" between October 2008 and August 2009. One ring member pleaded out and several time, she five others face trial later this year.

Lohan's testimony typified the fear felt by the celebrities whose homes had been targeted. "I just felt ... so violated ... that I literally packed as much stuff as I could. It wasn't about the things that were taken, it was just the fact that someone came into the only private space that I have in my life at this point."

Bloom, Audrina Partridge and Paris Hilton also recounted how they walked into their supposedly secure Hollywood Hills homes to find them ransacked and looted.

Burglars climb fences, crawl through doggy doors

Some items returned

Brian Aaron Green told the jury how the burglars of his home—the final one targeted—was so wealthy that he thought his missing items were simply misplaced. It wasn't until a detective called and told him his stolen jewelry burglars had been recovered that he realized he'd been robbed.

Some of the loot were eventually returned. Still missing are several irreplaceable personal items, including Bloom's mother's engagement ring that she gave to "The Hobbit" star. "I wouldn't sleep in my bedroom for about a month," he testified.

Deputy District Attorney Sasha Rita, who is handling the prosecution, urged jurors to overlook the stars' wealth and celebrity. Rita told the grand jury in closing remarks: "The one thing abundantly clear from listening to the testimony of all of the victims was that, what they lost most importantly was a sense of security."

'It's just awful'

None of the stars have testified in open court. Bloom likely would have been the first, but Alexis Neiers, who was charged with the break-in, took a plea deal before she could be subpoenaed to testify. She and accomplice Diamond Laney, who was convicted of the same crimes as Neiers, served 30 days in jail.

The stars could still take the stand if any of the members of the Bling Ring go to trial. The intimate testimony had been given only by a handful of witnesses, including Bloom's assistant Kirsten Hudson, who described coming home to find her rented home in complete disarray: "My front door wasn't locked ... my alarm didn't sound ... Everything I had was kind of thrown, and everything was pretty much disheveled."

A few coats, two paintings and other high-end jewelry and clothing were missing. When Lohan stepped into the witness box, she told jurors her safe had been moved and black fingerprints were on her white walls.

She said she never returned to that house.

Bloom estimated his losses at half a million dollars or more. He told the jury he suspected he'd been robbed by a close friend or an employee. "It's just awful. The value of things kind of fades away. It's really about who is it, who am I trusting to question?"

Bloom said only some of his items, mostly

FINAL >>

Empress Schuck

MY Shih Tzu Sue Mig is almost a year old and is a gift from my godfather. I know the Beagle is just four months and a present from my sister Princess. Sue Mig is mostly her obedient. He's not that affectionate and loves to eat. I know it hyperactive. He'd often hide or hard to reach places. But when you call him up, he'd run and lick your face. Sab al. songs take them to the vet and I play with them as often as I can. I like watching them when they are running all over the house. —Reynold Sab Olaga Jr.

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GALLERIA

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2 GOING THE DISTANCE	7 VAMPIRES SUCK
3 SA'YO LAMANG	8 PAJAMASKA
4 DESPICABLE ME	9 STEP UP 3
5 MAMAMAZE	10 THE LAST EXORCISM

MANILA — METRO EAST

MANILA	METRO EAST
1 SA'YO LAMANG	1 SA'YO LAMANG
2 VAMPIRES SUCK	2 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
3 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)	3 GOING THE DISTANCE
4 THE LAST EXORCISM	4 CATS AND DOGS 2: THE REVENGE OF KITTY GALORE
5 DESPICABLE ME	5 DESPICABLE ME
6 THE EXPENDABLES	6 THE EXPENDABLES
7 GOING THE DISTANCE	7 VAMPIRES SUCK
	8 THE LAST EXORCISM

NOVALICHES — FORUM ROBINSONS

NOVALICHES	FORUM ROBINSONS
1 PLAYBACK @ 25: XIAM PAIRIN "DATE NIGHT"	1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 DESPICABLE ME	2 GOING THE DISTANCE
3 GOING THE DISTANCE	3 THE LAST EXORCISM
4 SA'YO LAMANG / VAMPIRES SUCK	4 SA'YO LAMANG

STA. ROSA — LIPA

STA. ROSA	LIPA
1 THE EXPENDABLES	1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 MAMAMAZE	2 SA'YO LAMANG
3 SA'YO LAMANG	3 IP MAN 2
4 GOING THE DISTANCE	4 MAMAMAZE

DASMARIÑAS — STARMILLS

DASMARIÑAS	STARMILLS
1 SA'YO LAMANG	1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 GOING THE DISTANCE	2 MAMAMAZE
3 DESPICABLE ME	3 CATS & DOGS: THE REVENGE OF KITTY GALORE
4 IP MAN 2 3D	4 SA'YO LAMANG
	5 GOING THE DISTANCE
	6 THE EXPENDABLES

IMUS — ANGELES

IMUS	ANGELES
1 VAMPIRES SUCK	1 GOING THE DISTANCE
2 GOING THE DISTANCE	2 DESPICABLE ME
3 SA'YO LAMANG	3 SA'YO LAMANG
4 DESPICABLE ME	4 MAMAMAZE

TACLOBAN — DUMAGUETE

TACLOBAN	DUMAGUETE
1 SA'YO LAMANG	1 CATS AND DOGS 2: THE REVENGE OF KITTY GALORE
2 THE EXPENDABLES	2 MAMAMAZE
3 MAMAMAZE	3 SA'YO LAMANG

BACOLOD — ILOILO

BACOLOD	ILOILO
1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)	1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 SA'YO LAMANG	2 IP MAN 2
3 MAMAMAZE	3 MAMAMAZE
4 THE EXPENDABLES	4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 AN AMERICAN VIRGIN	5 SPLICE
6 CATS AND DOGS 2	6 SA'YO LAMANG

GENSAN

1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 SA'YO LAMANG
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 IP MAN 2

ILOCOS NORTE

1 SA'YO LAMANG
2 IP MAN 2
3 CATS AND DOGS 2: THE REVENGE OF KITTY GALORE

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD

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OVERHEARD

CHEN CHEN Gerbarosa on the fire that razed her house early this week, the second time to almost four years: "God's primary and still the most powerful message. He servant-led in prayers. Right now, my focus is on taking care of the immediate concerns and celebrations that this unfortunate incident has brought. I really cannot make any long-term plans at this point...yet certainly there is a Divine Plan. I know everything has a purpose."

RACHEL Ribon didn't sleep in that room for a month. ☞

Stars robbed...

Front page 01

declare and one of his prized watches, were ransacked. He recalled that clothing of his then-girlfriend, model Miranda Ros, was also stolen. Shoes and film are reported now.

'Bat Cave'

His house, which one detective likened to the "Bat Cave" because it couldn't be seen from the street or door, no one suspected. In May 2009,

Authorities say more than $2 million worth of items stolen from the stars have not been recovered.

Rachel Lee, one of the gang members, reportedly confessed to certain items of the stolen property in exchange for leniency, according to court filings.

A Louis Vuitton bag full of jewelry was retrieved in Pasig Ribon also arrested alleged gang members were nabbed in October.

Ribon told the grand jury that she ordered, according was stolen when she spotted these pictures

At least $2M worth of stolen items have not been recovered

this story leading to her heirlooms.

"My closet, where all my jewelry is kept, had been ransacked and, you know, basically two full safety deposit were, I guess, pushed into a bag," Ribon told the panel.

Also spotted were a topless photo of the socialite, which documents said was recovered from Lee.

Home security

Since the break-ins, several of the stars and they took greater measures with their home security. Despite their wealth and sophisticated security systems, several of them told jurors they couldn't remember if they set their alarms, or even locked their doors, on the days of the break-ins.

"We have always sort of hired a crew, I guess, ... trusting lifestyle and we just didn't set the alarm," Ribon said. "I never do, every time I leave the house. Even if it's for 20 minutes." ☞

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How teen idol Kim Chiu rewards herself

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Arnold Almacen

YOUNG actress Kim Chiu confesses to an obsession with the color pink.

"This started when I was really young," says the 20-year-old Cebuana. "I just didn't give in to it because I never had enough money to buy pink stuff. Now that I'm working, I'm able to indulge myself."

The star of the comedy series "Making Ishabi" explains: "Always have my environment being pink. Recently, Ritz had the interior of her Pod (S3.0) customized. "I had it interior replaced with everything pink."

Even Kim's work station is pink. "People can easily identify my dressing area. The mirrors are pink. My chair, comb, hair dryer, towel and robe—they're all pink," says Kim, "Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition Season 1" winner.

Bags

Although I own an Hermes, I just use it for special occasions. My favorite is the black Goyard bag that the Don (Vhadivina), ABS-CBN business unit head) gave me recently. I like it because I can use it with just about any outfit.

I prefer big bags so small ones

because I bring a lot of stuff with me when I go to work. When I buy an expensive bag, it's because I consider it as a reward for all my hard work. It's a way to motivate myself, save 'di ako magpaon nalit when I pro-do.

Cosmetics

I use Mac foundation; it's the only brand that I'm not allergic to. I don't leave home without make-up. Lipstick, eyeliner, powder and cheek tint and all. When you buy makeup, be sure it complements your skin color. Make sure you don't look like caked.

Shoes

I prefer wedge shoes to stilettos. I have a lot of them—fifty-to-one. I use stilettos only when I have shows. Do normal days, I wear wedges to make me look taller. Unlike stilettos, they're not painful on the feet and legs. I don't have a preferred brand. I buy depending on the design—I like three girly and colorful. I have a few pairs of flats, but I seldom wear them.

When buying shoes, make sure to try them on first. I don't buy ill-fitting shoes, no matter how pretty they are. I'm a size 8 U.S.

FAVE high-cut rubber shoes. Wedges aren't to painful on the legs and feet as stilettos.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

H&M over-stylish Bench denim

FLORAL dress, perfect for reading and driving with friends

Scents

My favorites are Moschino and Bulgari Aurelyan. I like their powdery scent. When I use them, I feel like I've just come out of the shower.

I buy scents that really last, at

KIM'S face is never oily with Blue skincare powder. Her other lipstick beauty secret is Bench cheek tint. Only Mac foundation works for her.

Accessories

I have a plastic container full of accessories—from the simple to the exaggerated. I wear the big ones when I appear on shows like "ASAP '10." They sort of enhance one's looks. I advise girls not to buy luxury earrings. Those kinds may look pretty but they hurt the earlobes. Comfort is important. I also like wearing bangles, but not the really showy ones.

Clothes

My very favorite is Tokwa. I'm thin, so I like shirts with layering pero 'di ako madalang mangis. I also like those with ruffles or those with cute designs. I hate tasin (spaghetti) kasi. I prefer cotton.

"The floral dress is one of my favorite outfits. I'd use it every day if I could. It's perfect for reading or going out with friends, or having dinner with loved ones.

My favorite pair of jeans is by Bench. I like its faded look. It's also so smashing. I can wear on any occasion. Very versatile.

DVDs

I keep my collection of DVDs in the car. I like rom-com movies. I also enjoy watching Korean and Chinese series films. I watch "Legend of the Shadowless Sword" over and over again. I want to play a role similar to the Zhou kind character. You can never tell, I might do action films soon day.

Gadgets

I can't leave home without my iPad. It has everything—up to-date games, my emails. It also

H&M soft phone from Cherry Mobile—pink, of course.

through I use only baby cologne when I'm at work. Dinadala kasi ang amoy ng perfume when you carryin a kid. With baby cologne, you smell fresh all the time.

FLORAL dress, perfect for reading and driving with friends

H&M soft phone from Cherry Mobile—pink, of course.

contains my script. I don't need to bring my laptop. I also send the files using it. It's not bulky at all.

My first (laptop) gave me an iPhone. It's still in its box. I told myself I will preserve it. She wrote a note for me on the box. I was really touched.

My newest phone is called Blade from Cherry Mobile. It's as small as a compact mirror. I really like it because it's so pink and girly. Its camera takes very clear pictures, too.

E-mail marinel@inquirer.com.ph

H&M soft phone from Cherry Mobile—pink, of course.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Evenie G. Velarde

George Clooney working on his 'best ever' prank

OnlyInHollywood /p2

Aiza Seguerra finds true calling after bonding with rockers

THAT the now TV child star-cum-sunny host-she performed in-room fiasco and sang the "love, drive, tables" in a Cuban joint.

Text and photos by Pocholo Concepcion

AIZA Seguerra has a confession to make: After spending roughly two decades as a performing artist, it was only recently that she realized music was her true calling.

"Music do-that-ang-e-enjoy-ang-ako-nung-ano ... pero a few years ago-ito lang talaga, oh my God, gusto ko pala talaga ito," Seguerra told the bespeaks during an interview for her comeback dubbed "I Am Changing" (with guests The Company's and Zero Image group band Pilot na Gaya, 24 at Mercy Bar on Visa Ave. QC.

Teen pluma have defined the career of the former child star-turned singer-songwriter, who turns 27 on Sept. 17.

She first started when, at age 3, she joined the Little Miss Philippines contest on the now-defunct TV show "Eat Bulaga." She didn't win it, but she became a cast member of the show and stayed for 18 years. Her precocious-child appeal landed her roles in other TV shows and several comedy movies.

She left "Eat Bulaga" to concentrate on her high school studies. Out of the limelight, she said, her popularity waned. Still, she had to work, to help her family. At the time, her father was a government employee with a low salary.

Aiza's career surging in teen flames. Later, dropping out of a music course in college at the University of Sto. Tomas, she joined a "show-band" that played in a Cuban joint called Jokes, and an acoustic trio that lasted for two gigs.

"Walang nanonood sa-amin," she recounted. "Habol sa sunog ka, siguro nga-ito-na-ito-na-ito lang."

AIZA /E3

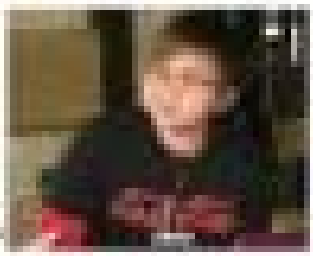
TWO ladies in red, Anna Paquin and Kate Walsh, at the Entertainment Weekly and Women in Film Pre-Emmy Party on Aug. 27.

RED CARPET

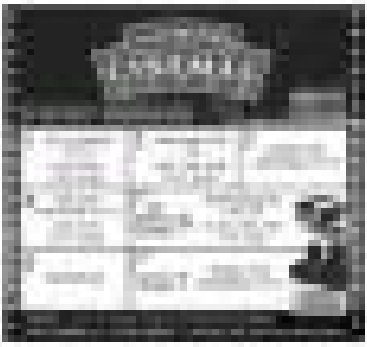
George Clooney working on his 'best ever' p

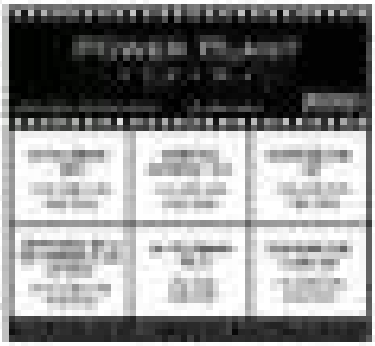
'I'm all set to direct one of the romantic leads you'd want to see'

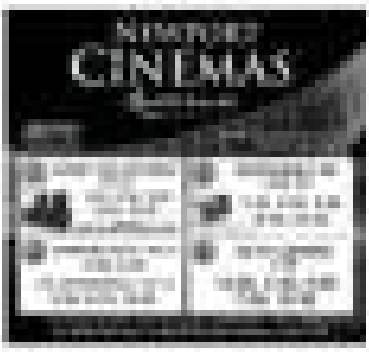
rank

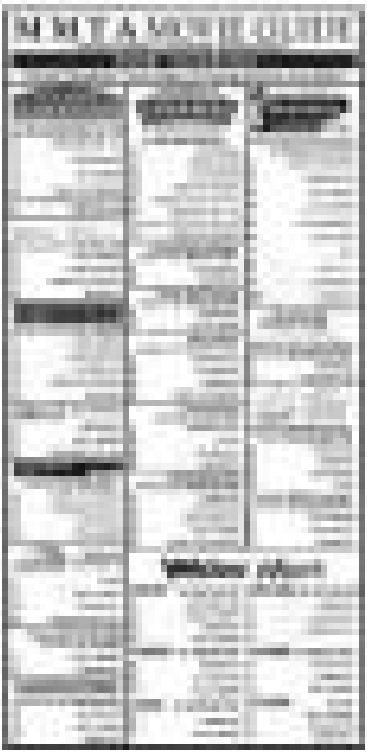


Alex Segarra finds ...









RP teams in 'Amazing Race' not all-Filipino

TAKE FIVE

Text and photos by Marinel R. Cruz

MANILA, RAF, Singapore—Controversy could hound the two teams picked by the producers of "The Amazing Race Asia" to represent the Philippines in its newest season.

The first team, Lani Pilkigan, 27, and Jacinta James, 27, were both born and raised in Australia. Pilkigan's roots hail from Skool, and James, Pilkigan's best friend, is 100 percent Australian.

Both contestants just happen to reside in the Philippines at the moment.

Team Philippines II—Richard Hardin, 36, and Richard Herrera, 31 or "The Richs"—both grew up in the United States, although Hardin's roots is a native of Cebu and Herrera's, from Bulacan.

Priscilla Tiu, SPI Networks Asia Ltd. communications director, was quick to defend the decision to include the two teams. "It's not a matter of nationality; it's also about where they live and work, and how they embrace the culture of the country. Jacinta and Lani reside in the Philippines and are proud to represent it... and they actually attempt to speak Tagalog."

Michael McKay, executive producer and director, praised our "Da Bosses 1, we had study and Laura, both English, represent Thailand. We see Jacinta and Lani as representatives of people who travel around Asia. In the final outcome, these girls just lit up the room. There's a lot outrageous on the show but I think viewers will find them funny."

The Richs are a good team, too, "very fit and determined," stressed McKay, president of AmberTV, which has produced several seasons of the series in Australia. "They have a very laid-back approach... but coming from a professional sport, they're not used to giving up. They fight a lot, but (they're really) likeable guys."

"TARA 4" also features father and daughter Hussein Batoo, 53, and Haneda Batoo Sinaga, 24 (Indonesia); travel buddies Sumana Guha, 31, and Dimple Inamdar, 32 (India); cousins Sahil Sanga, 25, and Mansi Katyal, 25 (India); beauty queen Nadine Xamira Samsi, 26, and TV personality Vibora Mahendra, 28 (Indonesia); husband-and-wife team Ivan Firebrace, 37, and Tengku Hilda, 30 (Malaysia); Lim Kok Hoe (Hilton), 26, a social worker, and Mabel Chantie, 25, student (Malaysia); actors Alex Lok, 31, and Wendy Lee, 24 (Hong Kong).

"TARA 4" premieres Sept. 23 on AXN.

Following an excerpt from our interview with director producer McKay:

How do you pick the contestants?

We go for diversity. The first question we ask is, "Will viewers watch them every week for three months?" We also ask, "How much of their lives would they share with viewers?"

Did you set out to get two pairs from each country?

Not really. Last year, we didn't have a team from Indonesia. For some reason, we always get strong teams from the Philippines. Two can make a whole series per season of the teams from the Philippines. I think it's something in the water... and keep eating the fish! (laughs)

TEAM Philippines II: "The Richs"

When you started, did you expect the show to become this big?

Absolutely; but we get a lot to live up to because the US version is now on its 18th series. We felt it was a big undertaking to do this in Asia. It's a massive show, with a big budget. We're proud to get the series going.

How different is this season from the previous ones?

If I had to choose one word that sums up this series, it would be humor. It's a funny series. I've seen a lot of rawness over the years but I found myself laughing really hard the other night about something that's so funny here.

To have come this far, you must have humor yourself.

We, the days are long. Part of my job is to be ahead of the team, so when they're sleeping, I'm going ahead. Sense of humor comes in very handy. I love doing it. I keep coming back because ... after every season. There's an other show that says you like this one. It's a knife for the (laughs) for the production team. We're constantly tested, constantly measured.

MICHAEL McKay

How do you make sure the challenges are doable?

Production team members test the challenges. In one actor, where we made the teams run Dubai, we also are Ba'al. When we went to the Philippines, the teams had to [get clues] to the carabao. We did that, too. I wouldn't say we perform the challenges with the same determination as the teams; we just want to make sure they're doable. We try to find fun challenges that reflect the country. The race is about taking people to different countries and experiencing different cultures.

Other shows, "Survivor" for example, are valued by looks. How do you control that?

There's a great bond among the teams and the production people. We don't want to let one another down. One of the things I talk about before the race (starts) is that bond. We've invested so much on the show—including months and months of work—and we don't want that destroyed by some dumb looks. The teams feel the same way; they're very protective. I have to remind them. They have fun and it's not being able to tell people they're in the show until it's aired. It drives them crazy—they have to make up some terrible lies!

E-mail: news@inquirer.com.ph